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DEPARTMENT OF STATE.

WASHINGTON

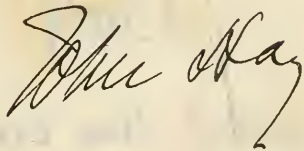
February 12, 1904.

Dear sir:-

I have received your letter of the 11th of February.

The portrait of the younger man of the group is of myself. The other, with a beard is Mr. Nicolay. The photograph was made, I think, in the year 1863.

Yours very truly

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "John Hay". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Hay".

Judd Stewart, Esquire,

71 Broadway, New York.

STATE OF NEW YORK

NOTICE

1900, 1901, 1902

1900, 1901, 1902

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Monograph Copy

The Life and Works of



Abraham  
Lincoln

Edited by

Nicolay and Hay

Vol. 1.      Part 1.

Extra illustrated with Letters,  
State Documents and rare Engravings

by

The Anglo-American Authors Ass'n.  
New York.





## Preface

“ May 30, 1893.

*“My dear Nicolay:* As you and Colonel Hay have now brought your great work to a most successful conclusion by the publication of your life of my father, I hope and request that you and he will supplement it by collecting, editing, and publishing the speeches, letters, state papers, and miscellaneous writings of my father. You and Colonel Hay have my consent and authority to obtain for yourselves such protection by copyright, or otherwise, in respect to the whole or any part of such a collection, as I might for any reason be entitled to have.

“Believe me, very sincerely yours,

“ROBERT T. LINCOLN.

“JOHN G. NICOLAY.”

Both in fulfilment of the request contained in the foregoing letter, and in execution of a long-cherished design, we present to the public this

edition of the Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, hoping and trusting that it will be received as a welcome addition to American historical literature.

JNO. G. NICOLAY,  
JOHN HAY.

Something more than a decade has elapsed since the preceding words were written, and during that period the assiduity of a multitude of Lincoln collectors has brought to light a large amount of manuscript material which inevitably escaped even such conscientious workers as Nicolay and Hay. The collectors have been so diligent during this period it is hardly probable that any of Lincoln's writings of importance can be any longer undiscovered. The aim has been to collect this material, add it to the work of the two great biographers, and so make a complete and definitive edition.

The chronological arrangement of the original edition has been followed and all new additions to the text inserted in their respective places and marked with an asterisk.

Explanatory and biographical notes have been added where deemed necessary to explain obscure allusions or to preserve the continuity of the narrative. These notes are mostly new;

those for which Nicolay and Hay remain responsible are in this edition signed with their initials.

Lincoln's personality inspired hundreds of the most prominent men of the 19th century to utter some tribute to his genius. The best and most appropriate of these have been selected as introductions to the different volumes of this edition.

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Special thanks are also due to numerous private collectors who have assisted the work by giving valuable suggestions and lending autograph letters, illustrations, etc., particularly to Mr. Judd Stewart of Plainfield, N. J., Major William H. Lambert of Philadelphia, Mr. C. W. McLellan of New York, Judge Daniel Fish of Minneapolis, and Mr. Richard Watson Gilder, editor of the "Century Magazine."



## Lincoln as a Writer<sup>1</sup>

**O**F STYLE, in the ordinary use of the word, Lincoln may be said to have had little. He certainly did not strive for an artistic method of expression through such imitation of the masters, for instance, as Robert Louis Stevenson's. There was nothing ambitiously elaborate or self-consciously simple in Lincoln's way of writing. He had not the scholar's range of words. He was not always grammatically accurate. He would doubtless have been very much surprised if any one had told him that he had a "style" at all. And yet, because he was determined to be understood, because he was honest, because he had a warm and true heart, because he had read good books eagerly and not coldly, and because there was in him a native good taste, as well as a strain of imagination, he achieved a singularly clear and forcible style, which took color from his own noble character, and became a thing individual and distinguished.

He was, indeed, extremely modest about his accomplishments. His great desire was to con-

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vince those whom he addressed, and if he could do this,—if he could make his views clear to them, still more if he could make them appear reasonable,—he was satisfied. In one of his speeches in the great debate with Douglas he said: "Gentlemen, Judge Douglas informed you that this speech of mine was probably carefully prepared. I admit that it was. I am not a master of language; I have not a fine education; I am not capable of entering into a disquisition upon dialectics, as I believe you call it; but I do not believe the language I employed bears any such construction as Judge Douglas puts upon it. But I don't care about a quibble in regard to words. I know what I meant, and I will not leave this crowd in doubt, if I can explain it to them, what I really meant in the use of that paragraph."

Who are, to Americans at least, the two most interesting men of action of the nineteenth century? Why not Napoleon and Lincoln? No two men could have been more radically different in many ways; but they were both great rulers, one according to the "good old plan" of might, the other by the good new plan of right: autocrat—democrat. They were alike in this—that both were intensely interesting personalities; both were moved by imagination; and both acquired remarkable power of expression. One



used this power to carry out his own sometimes wise, sometimes selfish, purposes; to deceive and to dominate; the other for the expression of truth and the persuasion of his fellowmen.

Napoleon's literary art was the making of phrases which pierced like a Corsican knife or tingled the blood like the call of a trumpet. His words went to their mark quick as a stroke of lightning. When he speaks it is as if an earthquake had passed under one's feet.

Lincoln's style is very different; heroic, appealing, gracious or humorous, it does not so much startle as melt the heart. These men were alike in this—that they learned to express themselves by dint of long practice, and both in youth wrote much nonsense. Napoleon in his young days wrote romance and history; Lincoln wrote verse and composed speeches. Napoleon failed as a literary man; Lincoln certainly did not make any great success as a lyceum lecturer; in fact, his style was at its best only when his whole heart was enlisted.

Lincoln's style, at its best, is characterized by great simplicity and directness, which in themselves are artistic qualities. In addition there is an agreeable cadence, not over-done except in one curious instance,—a passage of the Second Inaugural,—where it deflects into actual rhythm and rhyme:

Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—  
That this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass  
away.

This does not spoil, but it somewhat injures, one of the most memorable of his writings.

Then there is in Lincoln a quaintness, a homeliness and humor of illustration, along with a most engaging frankness and intellectual honesty. The reader has both an intellectual and moral satisfaction in the clearness and fairness of the statement. All this affects agreeably the literary form, and helps to give Lincoln's style at times the charm of imaginative utterance; for imagination in literature is, essentially, the faculty of seeing clearly and the art of stating clearly the actual reality. There was nothing of invention in Lincoln's imagination; his was the imagination that is implied in a strong realization of the truth of things in the mind of the writer or speaker.

When these letters and speeches of Lincoln were appearing in the papers as part of the news of the day, I wonder how many of us who were then living appreciated them from the literary point of view. I remember that at a certain period, some time after the war, I seemed for the first time to awake fully to the attraction of Lincoln's style. Beginning with the inimitable

speech at Gettysburg, I reread many of his writings, and felt everywhere his genius for expression.

Where and how did Lincoln gain this mastery of expression? He said of himself:

The aggregate of all his schooling did not amount to one year. He was never in a college or academy as a student. . . . What he has in the way of education he has picked up. After he was twenty-three and had separated from his father, he studied English grammar—imperfectly, of course, but so as to speak and write as well as he now does. He studied and nearly mastered the six books of Euclid since he was a member of Congress. He regrets his want of education and does what he can to supply the want.

As a boy at home we are told that he would write, and do sums in arithmetic, on the wooden shovel by the fireside, shaving off the used surface and beginning again. At nineteen it is recorded that he "had read every book he could find, and could spell down the whole country." He read early the Bible, Aesop's "Fables," "Robinson Crusoe," "Pilgrim's Progress," a history of the United States, Weems's "Life of Washington," Franklin's "Autobiography"; later, the life of Clay and the works of Burns and Shakspeare. Not a bad list of books if taken

seriously and not mixed with trash; for, of course, culture has to do not so much with the extent of the information as with the depth of the impression.

The youthful Lincoln pondered also over the Revised Statutes of Indiana; and "he would sit in the twilight and read a dictionary as long as he could see." John Hanks said: "When Abe and I returned to the house from work he would go to the cupboard, snatch a piece of corn-bread, take down a book, sit down, cock his legs up as high as his head, and read."

At twenty-four, when he was supposed to be keeping a shop, Nicolay and Hay speak of the "grotesque youth, habited in homespun tow, lying on his back, with his feet on the trunk of the tree, and poring over his books by the hour, grinding around with the shade as it shifted from north to east."

The youth not only read and thought, but wrote, among other things, nonsensical verses; and he composed speeches. He went early into politics, and soon became a thoughtful and effective speaker and debater. Of the language that Lincoln heard and used in boyhood, says Nicolay, in an essay on "Lincoln's Literary Experiments" printed since the "Life" was issued, "though the vocabulary was scanty, the words were short and forcible." He learned among

men and women poor and inured to hardship how the plain people think and feel.

In his young manhood at Springfield he measured wits with other bright young lawyers, in plain and direct language before plain and simple-minded auditors, either in political discussion or in the court-room; either in the capital or in the country towns of Illinois. His mathematical and legal studies were an aid to precise statement, and his native honesty made him frank and convincing in argument. He felt himself to be a poor defender of a guilty client, and sometimes shirked the job.

If for a brief period in his youth he indulged in anything resembling the spread-eagle style of oratory, he was quick, as Nicolay declares, to realize the danger and overcome the temptation. His secretary relates that in his later years he used to repeat with glee the description of the Southwestern orator of whom it is said: "He mounted the rostrum, threw back his head, shined his eyes, and left the consequences to God."

By practice in extemporaneous speaking Lincoln learned to do a most difficult thing—namely, to produce literature on his legs. It is difficult thus to produce literature, because the words must flow with immediate precision. It is unusual for a politician to go through life always

addressing audiences, and yet always avoiding the orator's temptation to please and captivate by extravagant and false sentiment and statement. The writer, and particularly the political writer, is tempted to this sort of immorality, but still more the speaker, for with the latter the reward of applause is prompt and seductive. It is amazing to look over Lincoln's record and find how seldom he went beyond bounds, how fair and just he was, how responsible and conscientious his utterances long before these utterances became of national importance. Yet it was largely because of this very quality that they assumed national importance. And then both his imagination and his sympathy helped him here, for while he saw and keenly felt his own side of the argument, he could see as clearly, and he could sympathetically understand, the side of his opponent.

Lincoln was barely twenty-three when, as a candidate for the legislature, he issued a formal address to the people of Sangamon County. It is the first paper preserved by Nicolay and Hay in their collection of his addresses and letters. Nicolay well says that "as a literary production no ordinary college graduate would need to be ashamed of it."

In this address we already find that honest purpose, that "sweet reasonableness" and per-



suasiveness of speech, which is characteristic of his later and more celebrated utterances. In his gathered writings and addresses we find, indeed, touches of the true Lincoln genius here and there from the age of twenty-three on. In the literary record of about his thirty-third year occur some of the most surprising proofs of the delicacy of his nature—of that culture of the soul which had taken place in him in the midst of such harsh and unpromising environment. Reference is made to the letters written to his young friend Joshua F. Speed, a member of the Kentucky family associated by marriage with the family of the poet Keats.

In Lincoln's early serious verse the feeling is right, though the art is lacking; but the verses are interesting in that they show a good ear. Note has been made of a pleasing cadence in Lincoln's prose; and it is not strange that he should show a rythmical sense in his verse. He showed a good deal of common sense in not going on with this sort of thing, and in confining the publication of his inadequate rhymes to the sacred privacy of indulgent and sympathetic friendship.

We come now to Lincoln the accomplished orator. His speech in Congress on the 28th of January, 1848, on the Mexican War, strikes the note of solemn verity and of noble indignation



which a little later rang through the country, and, with other voices, aroused it to a sense of impending danger.

It was in 1851 that he wrote some family letters that not only show him in a charming light as the true and wise friend of his shiftless step-brother, but the affectionate guardian of his step-mother, who had been such a good mother to him. There is something Greek in the clear phrase and pure reason of these epistles.

*Dear Brother:* When I came into Charleston day before yesterday, I learned that you are anxious to sell the land where you live and move to Missouri. I have been thinking of this ever since, and cannot but think such a notion is utterly foolish. What can you do in Missouri better than here? Is the land any richer? Can you there, any more than here, raise corn and wheat and oats without work? Will anybody there, any more than here, do your work for you? If you intend to go to work, there is no better place than right where you are; if you do not intend to go to work, you cannot get along anywhere. Squirming and crawling about from place to place can do no good. You have raised no crop this year; and what you really want is to sell the land, get the money, and spend it. Part with the land you have, and, my life upon it, you will never after own a spot big enough to bury you in.

We find in his Peoria speech of 1854 a statement

of his long contention against the extension of slavery, and a proof of his ability to cope intellectually with the ablest debaters of the West. His Peoria speech was in answer to Judge Douglas, with whom four years afterward he held the far-resounding debate. Lincoln was now forty-five years old, and his oratory contains that moral impetus which was to give it greater and greater power.

In 1856 occurred the Frémont and Dayton campaign, which came not very far from being the Frémont and Lincoln campaign. In a speech in this campaign he used a memorable phrase: "All this talk about the dissolution of the Union is humbug, nothing but folly. *We do not want to dissolve the Union; you shall not.*" In his famous speech delivered at Springfield, Illinois, at the close of the Republican State Convention of 1858,—in which he had been named as candidate for United States Senator,—the skilful and serious orator rises not merely to the broad level of nationality, but to the plane of universal humanity. As events thicken and threaten, his style becomes more solemn. So telling at last his power of phrase that it would hardly seem to be an exaggeration to declare that the war itself was partly induced by the fact that Abraham Lincoln was able to express his pregnant thoughts with the art of a

master. How familiar now these words of prophecy:

“A house divided against itself cannot stand.” I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided.

The cadence of Lincoln's prose with its burden of high hope, touched with that heroism which is so near to pathos, reminds one of the *Leit-motif*, the “leading motive” in symphony and music-drama of which musicians make use, and which is especially characteristic of the manner of Wagner:

Two years ago the Republicans of the nation mustered over thirteen hundred thousand strong. We did this under the single impulse of resistance to a common danger, with every external circumstance against us. Of strange, discordant, and even hostile elements, we gathered from the four winds, and formed and fought the battle through, under the constant hot fire of a disciplined, proud, and pampered enemy. Did we brave all then to falter now—now, when that same enemy is wavering, dissevered, and belligerent? The result is not doubtful. *We shall not fail—if we stand firm, we shall not fail. Wise counsels may accelerate or mistakes delay it, but, sooner or later, the victory is sure to come.*

We have arrived now at the period of the joint debate between Lincoln and Douglas. In Lincoln we have the able and practised attorney, with one side of his nature open to the eternal; in Douglas the skilful lawyer, adroit and ambitious, not easily moved by the moral appeals which so quickly took hold upon Lincoln, but a man capable of right and patriotic action when the depths of his nature were stirred.

Among the most characteristic qualities of Lincoln's expression are its morality, its insight, and its prophecy; and in the now famous debate he reached well-nigh the fullness of his power to put great thoughts into fitting language. Straight his words went into the minds and hearts of eagerly listening crowds. The question, he contended, was as to the right or the wrong of slavery:

That [he said] is the real issue. That is the issue that will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between these two principles—right and wrong—throughout the world. They are the two principles that have stood face to face from the beginning of time, and will ever continue to struggle. The one is the common right of humanity, and the other the divine right of kings.

A recent biographer of Lincoln, Mr. John T. Morse, Jr., says that "it is just appreciation, not extravagance, to say that the cheap and miserable little volume, now out of print, containing in bad newspaper type, 'The Lincoln and Douglas Debates,' holds some of the masterpieces of oratory of all ages and nations."

It is interesting to recall the fact that, in the pause of his affairs after the debate with Douglas, Lincoln took up the then popular custom of lyceum-lecturing. In the very year before his election to the Presidency the great statesman and orator was engaged in delivering a totally uninspired lecture on "Discoveries, Inventions, and Improvements" in towns near Springfield, and in Springfield itself on Washington's Birthday in the fateful year of 1860. There was little in this lecture to attract the slightest attention; and while it may have given satisfaction among neighbors, it could never have added to his fame. Yet when he had the opportunity of an engagement to lecture on political subjects in this same month of February, he made what is now known as the "great address" at Cooper Union. Soon after this came his nomination, then his election to the Presidency of the United States; and with these events he may be said to have resumed his true literary career, for (as I have said) his style was at its best only when



CHESTER A. ARTHUR





he was dealing with a cause in which his whole heart was enlisted.

By way of contrast to what has passed and is to come, let us cull some of the passages in which shone Lincoln's wit and humor. How pleasing it is to know that his melancholy nature, his burdened spirit, were refreshed with glimpses—often storms—of mirth! They say that to see Lincoln laugh was an amazing sight.

The humor of which we learn so much from those who heard him tell his quaint and often Rabelaisian stories came out sharply and roughly in one of his congressional speeches, in which he referred with grim sarcasm to General Cass's military record as used for political ammunition. Here are some later touches of his wit: "The plainest print cannot be read through a gold eagle." "If you think you can slander a woman into loving you, or a man into voting for you, try it till you are satisfied." Again: "Has Douglas the exclusive right in this country to be on all sides of all questions?" Again: "In his numerous speeches now being made in Illinois, Senator Douglas regularly argues against the doctrine of the equality of men; and while he does not draw the conclusion that the superiors ought to enslave the inferiors, he evidently wishes his hearers to draw that conclusion. He shirks the responsibility of pulling the house

down, but he digs under it that it may fall of its own weight."

"The enemy would fight," said the President once, in a letter to General Hooker, "in intrenchments, and have you at a disadvantage, and so, man for man, worst you at that point, while his main force would in some way be getting an advantage of you northward. In one word, I would not take any risk of being entangled upon the river like an ox jumped half over a fence and liable to be torn by dogs front and rear without a fair chance to gore one way and kick the other." It was also to Hooker that he wrote: "Only those generals who gain successes can set up dictators. What I now ask of you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship."

In a letter written in 1859 to a Boston committee he said, in describing a change in party standards: "I remember being once much amused at seeing two partially intoxicated men engaged in a fight with their greatcoats on, which fight, after a long and rather harmless contest, ended in each having fought himself out of his own coat and into that of the other. If the two leading parties of this day are really identical with the two in the days of Jefferson and Adams, they have performed the same feat as the two drunken men." And this is from his very last public address: "Concede that the

new government of Louisiana is only to what it should be as the egg is to the fowl, we shall sooner have the fowl by hatching the egg than by smashing it."

A specimen of his spoken wit is the story told of his reply to the countryman who at a reception said,—in the prepared speech that patriots so often shoot at the President as they plunge past him in the processions through the White House,—“I believe in God Almighty and Abraham Lincoln.” “You’re more than half right,” quickly answered the President. When, at a conference with Confederate leaders, he was reminded by the Southern commissioner, Mr. Hunter, that Charles I entered into an agreement with “parties in arms against the government,” Lincoln said: “I do not profess to be posted in history. In all such matters I will turn you over to Seward. All I distinctly recollect about the case of Charles I is that he lost his head.”

Lincoln was elected to the Presidency of a country on the verge of civil war. In his farewell to his fellow-townsmen sounds again that musical “motive” of which I have spoken, recurring like the refrain of a sad but heroic poem. Remember the passage quoted before. It occurred in his speech of 1858: “The result is not doubtful. We shall not fail—if we stand firm,

we shall not fail. Wise counsels may accelerate or mistakes delay it, but, sooner or later, the victory is sure to come."

In parting from his old neighbors he said:

Here my children have been born, and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him I cannot succeed. With that assistance I cannot fail. Trusting in Him, who can go with me and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well.

The First Inaugural concludes with a passage of great tenderness. We learn from Nicolay and Hay that the suggestion of that passage, its first draft indeed, came from Seward. But compare this first draft with the passage as amended and adopted by Lincoln! This is Seward's:

I close. We are not, we must not be, aliens or enemies, but fellow-countrymen and brethren. Although passion has strained our bonds of affection too hardly, they must not, I am sure they will not, be broken. The mystic chords which, proceeding from so many battle-fields and so many patriot graves, pass through all the hearts and all hearths in this broad continent of ours, will yet again harmonize in their

ancient music when breathed upon by the guardian angel of the nation.

And this is Lincoln's:

I am loth to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battle-field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.

There is in this last something that suggests music; again we hear the strain of the *Leitmotif*. Strangely enough, in 1858 Lincoln himself had used a figure not the same as, but suggestive of, this very one now given by Seward. He was speaking of the moral sentiment, the sentiment of equality, in the Declaration of Independence. "*That*," he said, "is the electric chord in that Declaration, that links the hearts of patriotic and liberty-loving men together, that will link those patriotic hearts as long as the love of freedom exists in the minds of men throughout the world."

In the final paragraph of the Second Inaugural we find again the haunting music with which the First Inaugural closed. On the heart

of what American—North or South—are not the words imprinted?

With malice toward none; with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations.

As the great musician brings somewhere to its highest expression the motive which has been entwined from first to last in his music-drama, so did the expression of Lincoln's passion for his country reach its culmination in the tender and majestic phrases of the Gettysburg Address:

In a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that





H. REVELS



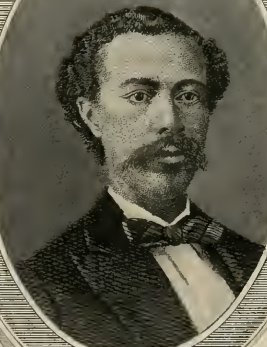
JAMES T. RAPIER



S. K. BRUCE



J. H. RAINEY



JOHN R. LYNCH





cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

But there is a letter of Lincoln's which may well be associated with the Gettysburg Address. It was written, just one year after the delivery of the Address, to a mother who, the President heard, had lost five sons in the army. I believe the number was not so large, though that does not matter.

#### EXECUTIVE MANSION

Washington, November 21, 1864.

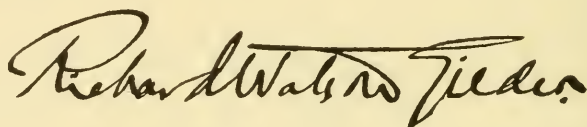
MRS. BIXBY, Boston, Massachusetts.

DEAR MADAM: I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant-General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved

and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom. Yours very sincerely and respectfully,

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

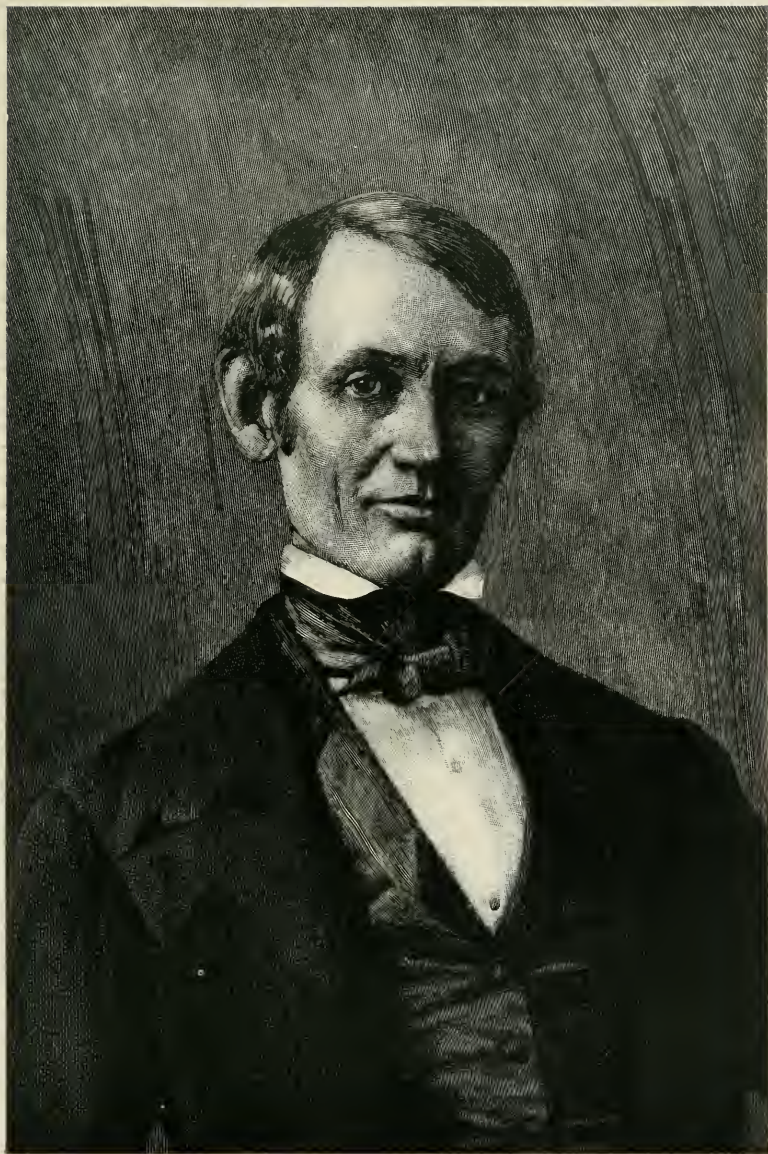
This letter of consolation in its simplicity and fitness again recalls the Greek spirit. It is like one of those calm monuments of grief which the traveler may still behold in that small cemetery under the deep Athenian sky, where those who have been dead so many centuries are kept alive in the memories of men by an art which is immortal.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Richard Watson Fildes". The script is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'R' and a long, sweeping underline that extends across the signature.



## First Photograph of Abraham Lincoln

*Wood Engraving by Thomas Johnson from the Original Daguerreotype made about 1848 when Lincoln was thirty-nine years of age. Owned by the Hon. Robert T. Lincoln, through whose courtesy it has been published.*







# Abraham Lincoln<sup>1</sup>

BY RICHARD HENRY STODDARD

This man whose homely face you look upon  
Was one of Nature's masterful, great men;  
Born with strong arms, that unfought battles won,  
Direct of speech and cunning with the pen,  
Chosen for large designs, he had the art  
Of winning with his humor, and he went  
Straight to his mark, which was the human heart;  
Wise, too, for what he could not break, he bent.  
Upon his back a more than Atlas-load,  
The burden of the Commonwealth, was laid;  
He stooped, and rose up to it, though the road  
Shot suddenly downward, not a whit dismayed:  
    Patiently resolute, what the stern hour  
    Demanded, that he was,— that Man, that  
    Power.

<sup>1</sup> By special permission of *Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons.*



# Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln

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ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF SANGAMON COUNTY,  
March 9, 1832 <sup>1</sup>

**F**ELLOW-CITIZENS: Having become a candidate for the honorable office of one of your Representatives in the next General Assembly of this State, in accordance with an established custom and the principles of true Republicanism, it becomes my duty to make known to you, the people whom I propose to represent, my sentiments with regard to local affairs.

Time and experience have verified to a demonstration the public utility of internal improvements. That the poorest and most thinly popu-

<sup>1</sup> Lincoln was just past his twenty-third year when he indited this address to the people of Sangamon County. Though defeated in the effort to become a member of the General Assembly of the State of Illinois, his address, distributed in the form of a hand-bill, aroused great interest and enthusiasm among his fellow-citizens. It is worth passing mention to note that this defeat for the Illinois Legislature was the only one Lincoln ever suffered by direct vote of the people.

lated countries would be greatly benefited by the opening of good roads, and in the clearing of navigable streams within their limits, is what no person will deny. Yet it is folly to undertake works of this or any other kind without first knowing that we are able to finish them,—as half-finished work generally proves to be labor lost. There cannot justly be any objection to having railroads and canals, any more than to other good things, provided they cost nothing. The only objection is to paying for them; and the objection arises from the want of ability to pay.

With respect to the County of Sangamon, some more easy means of communication than it now possesses, for the purpose of facilitating the task of exporting the surplus products of its fertile soil, and importing necessary articles from abroad, are indispensably necessary. A meeting has been held by the citizens of Jacksonville and the adjacent country, for the purpose of deliberating and inquiring into the expediency of constructing a railroad from some eligible point on the Illinois River, through the town of Jacksonville, in Morgan County, to the town of Springfield, in Sangamon County. This is, indeed, a very desirable object. No other improvement that reason will justify us in hoping for can equal in utility the railroad. It is a never-failing

source of communication between places of business remotely situated from each other. Upon the railroad the regular progress of commercial intercourse is not interrupted by either high or low water, or freezing weather, which are the principal difficulties that render our future hopes of water communication precarious and uncertain.

Yet, however desirable an object the construction of a railroad through our country may be; however high our imaginations may be heated at thoughts of it,—there is always a heart-appalling shock accompanying the amount of its cost, which forces us to shrink from our pleasing anticipations. The probable cost of this contemplated railroad is estimated at \$290,000; the bare statement of which, in my opinion, is sufficient to justify the belief that the improvement of the Sangamon River is an object much better suited to our infant resources.

Respecting this view, I think I may say, without the fear of being contradicted, that its navigation may be rendered completely practicable as high as the mouth of the South Fork, or probably higher, to vessels of from twenty-five to thirty tons burden, for at least one half of all common years, and to vessels of much greater burden a part of the time. From my peculiar circumstances, it is probable that for the last

twelve months I have given as particular attention to the stage of the water in this river as any other person in the country. In the month of March, 1831, in company with others, I commenced the building of a flatboat on the Sangamon, and finished and took her out in the course of the spring. Since that time I have been concerned in the mill at New Salem. These circumstances are sufficient evidence that I have not been very inattentive to the stages of the water. The time at which we crossed the mill-dam being in the last days of April, the water was lower than it had been since the breaking of winter in February, or than it was for several weeks after. The principal difficulties we encountered in descending the river were from the drifted timber, which obstructions all know are not difficult to be removed. Knowing almost precisely the height of water at that time, I believe I am safe in saying that it has as often been higher as lower since.

From this view of the subject it appears that my calculations with regard to the navigation of the Sangamon cannot but be founded in reason; but, whatever may be its natural advantages, certain it is that it never can be practically useful to any great extent without being greatly improved by art. The drifted timber, as I have before mentioned, is the most formidable bar-

rier to this object. Of all parts of this river, none will require so much labor in proportion to make it navigable as the last thirty or thirty-five miles; and going with the meanderings of the channel, when we are this distance above its mouth we are only between twelve and eighteen miles above Beardstown in something near a straight direction; and this route is upon such low ground as to retain water in many places during the season, and in all parts such as to draw two thirds or three fourths of the river water at all high stages.

This route is on prairie-land the whole distance, so that it appears to me, by removing the turf a sufficient width, and damming up the old channel, the whole river in a short time would wash its way through, thereby curtailing the distance and increasing the velocity of the current very considerably, while there would be no timber on the banks to obstruct its navigation in future; and being nearly straight, the timber which might float in at the head would be apt to go clear through. There are also many places above this where the river, in its zigzag course, forms such complete peninsulas as to be easier to cut at the necks than to remove the obstructions from the bends, which, if done, would also lessen the distance.

What the cost of this work would be, I am



unable to say. It is probable, however, that it would not be greater than is common to streams of the same length. Finally, I believe the improvement of the Sangamon River to be vastly important and highly desirable to the people of the county; and, if elected, any measure in the legislature having this for its object, which may appear judicious, will meet my approbation and receive my support.

It appears that the practice of loaning money at exorbitant rates of interest has already been opened as a field for discussion; so I suppose I may enter upon it without claiming the honor, or risking the danger which may await its first explorer. It seems as though we are never to have an end to this baneful and corroding system, acting almost as prejudicially to the general interests of the community as a direct tax of several thousand dollars annually laid on each county for the benefit of a few individuals only, unless there be a law made fixing the limits of usury. A law for this purpose, I am of opinion, may be made without materially injuring any class of people. In cases of extreme necessity, there could always be means found to cheat the law; while in all other cases it would have its intended effect. I would favor the passage of a law on this subject which might not be very easily evaded. Let it be such that the labor and

difficulty of evading it could only be justified in cases of greatest necessity.

Upon the subject of education, not presuming to dictate any plan or system respecting it, I can only say that I view it as the most important subject which we as a people can be engaged in. That every man may receive at least a moderate education, and thereby be enabled to read the histories of his own and other countries, by which he may duly appreciate the value of our free institutions, appears to be an object of vital importance, even on this account alone, to say nothing of the advantages and satisfaction to be derived from all being able to read the Scriptures, and other works both of a religious and moral nature, for themselves.

For my part, I desire to see the time when education—and by its means, morality, sobriety, enterprise, and industry—shall become much more general than at present, and should be gratified to have it in my power to contribute something to the advancement of any measure which might have a tendency to accelerate that happy period.

With regard to existing laws, some alterations are thought to be necessary. Many respectable men have suggested that our estray laws, the law respecting the issuing of executions, the road law, and some others, are deficient in their pres-

ent form, and require alterations. But, considering the great probability that the framers of those laws were wiser than myself, I should prefer not meddling with them, unless they were first attacked by others; in which case I should feel it both a privilege and a duty to take that stand which, in my view, might tend most to the advancement of justice.

But, fellow-citizens, I shall conclude. Considering the great degree of modesty which should always attend youth, it is probable I have already been more presuming than becomes me. However, upon the subjects of which I have treated, I have spoken as I have thought. I may be wrong in regard to any or all of them; but, holding it a sound maxim that it is better only sometimes to be right than at all times to be wrong, so soon as I discover my opinions to be erroneous, I shall be ready to renounce them.

Every man is said to have his peculiar ambition. Whether it be true or not, I can say, for one, that I have no other so great as that of being truly esteemed of my fellow-men, by rendering myself worthy of their esteem. How far I shall succeed in gratifying this ambition is yet to be developed. I am young, and unknown to many of you. I was born, and have ever remained, in the most humble walks of life. I have no wealthy or popular relations or friends to recom-

mend me. My case is thrown exclusively upon the independent voters of the country; and, if elected, they will have conferred a favor upon me for which I shall be unremitting in my labors to compensate. But, if the good people in their wisdom shall see fit to keep me in the background, I have been too familiar with disappointments to be very much chagrined.

Your friend and fellow-citizen,  
A. LINCOLN.

NEW SALEM, March 9, 1832.

#### RECEIPT FOR ARMS

BEARDSTOWN, April 28, 1832.

Special Order (No. —).

The Brigade Inspector, having inspected Captain Abraham Lincoln's Company and mustered them into service, reports that thirty guns are wanting to arm the Company completely. Quartermaster-General Edwards will furnish the Captain with that number of arms, if to be had in his department.

JOHN J. HARDIN, *Brig. Major.*

By order of

BRIGADIER-GENERAL SAMUEL WHITESIDE,  
*Commanding B. M. V. Illinois.*

Received April 28, 1832, for the use of the

Sangamon County company under my command, thirty muskets, bayonets, screws, and wipers, which I oblige myself to return upon demand.

A. LINCOLN, *Captain.*

*Guns. Bayonets. Screws. Wipers.*

19	..	15	..	9	..	21
3	..	2	..	1	..	1
1	..	1	..	4	..	1
1	..	1	..	..	..	..
1	..	1	..	..	..	..
1	..	..	..	..	..	..
—		—		—		—
26		20		14		23

\*LETTER TO E. C. BLANKENSHIP

NEW SALEM, Aug. 10, 1833.

E. C. BLANKENSHIP.

*Dear Sir:* In regard to the time David Rankin served the enclosed discharge shows correctly—as well as I can recollect—having no writing to refer. The transfer of Rankin from my company occurred as follows: Rankin having lost his horse at Dixon's ferry, and having acquaintance in one of the foot companies who were going down the river, was desirous to go with them, and one Galishen, being an acquaintance of mine, and belonging to the company in which

Rankin wished to go, wished to leave it and join mine; this being the case it was agreed that they should exchange places and answer to each other's names—as it was expected we all *would* be discharged in *very* few days. As to a blanket—I have no knowledge of Rankin ever getting any. The above embraces all the facts now in my recollection which are pertinent to the case.

I shall take pleasure in giving any further information in my power should you call on me.

Your friend, A. LINCOLN.

\*LETTER AND RECEIPT TO GEORGE SPEARS

[1833-1834]

*Mr. Spears:* At your request I send you a receipt for the postage on your paper. I am somewhat surprised at your request. I will, however, comply with it. The law requires Newspaper postage to be paid in advance, and now that I have waited a full year you choose to wound my feelings by insinuating that unless you get a receipt I will probably make you pay it again—

Respectfully, A. LINCOLN.

Received of George Spears in full for postage on the "Sangamon Journal" up to the first of July, 1834.

A. LINCOLN, P. M.

## \* CERTIFICATE OF SURVEY

January 14, 1834.

Surveyed for Russel Goodby—the West half of the North East quarter of Section 30 in Township 19 North of Range 6 West, Beginning at a White oak 12 inches in diameter leaving N 34 E 84 Link, a White oak 10 inches S 58 W 98 Link,—thence South 40 chains, to a White oak 12 inches N 73 E 20 Links—Thence East 20 chains to a Black oak 12 inches S 54 W 16 Links—Thence North 40 chains to a Post and mound. Thence West 20 chains to the beginning Chainmen.

J. CALHOUN, *S. S. C.*

HERCULES DEMMING. By A. LINCOLN.

TO THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT FOR  
THE COUNTY OF SANGAMON, AT ITS JUNE  
TERM 1834

We the undersigned being appointed to view and locate a road, beginning at Musick's ferry on Salt creek, Via New Salem to the county line in the direction to Jacksonville—respectfully report that we have performed the duties of said view and location as required by law, and that we have made the location on good ground and believe the establishment of the same to be necessary and proper.







The enclosed map gives the courses and distances as required by law.

MICHAEL KILLION,  
HUGH ARMSTRONG,  
A. LINCOLN.

*(Indorsement in pencil on the foregoing.)*

A. Lincoln, 5 days at \$3.00.....	\$15.00
John A. Kelsoe, chain bearer for 5 days at	
75 cts. ....	3.75
Robert Lloyd, 5 days at 75 cts.....	3.75
Hugh Armstrong, for services as axeman,	
5 days at 75 cts.....	3.75
A. Lincoln, for making plat and report..	2.50

\*REPORT OF ROAD SURVEY, Nov. 4, 1834

*To the County Commissioner's Court for the  
County of Sangamon:*

We, the undersigned, being appointed to view and relocate a part of the road between Sangamon town and the town of Athens, respectfully report that we have performed the duty of said appointment according to law—and that we have made the said relocation on good ground—and believe the same to be necessary and proper.

JAMES STROWBRIDGE,  
LEVI CANTRALL,  
A. LINCOLN.

ATHENS, Nov. 4, 1834.

Herewith is the map—The court may allow  
me the following charges if they think proper—  
1 day's labor as surveyor..... \$3.00  
Making map ..... .50

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\$3.50

A. LINCOLN.

## ANNOUNCEMENT OF POLITICAL VIEWS<sup>1</sup>

NEW SALEM, June 13, 1836.

*To the Editor of the "Journal":* In your paper of last Saturday I see a communication, over the signature of "Many Voters," in which the candidates who are announced in the "Journal" are called upon to "show their hands." Agreed. Here's mine.

I go for all sharing the privileges of the government who assist in bearing its burdens. Consequently, I go for admitting all whites to the right of suffrage who pay taxes or bear arms (by no means excluding females).

If elected, I shall consider the whole people

<sup>1</sup>At the time of the publication of this simple "platform" Lincoln held the position of postmaster of New Salem, and was deputy surveyor of Sangamon County. He stood second among the four successful candidates in this election and had become very popular. Two toasts then going the round of political dinners were: "A. Lincoln: One of Nature's noblemen," and "Abraham Lincoln: He has fulfilled the expectations of his friends and disappointed the hopes of his enemies."

of Sangamon my constituents, as well those that oppose as those that support me.

While acting as their representative, I shall be governed by their will on all subjects upon which I have the means of knowing what their will is; and upon all others, I shall do what my own judgment teaches me will best advance their interests. Whether elected or not, I go for distributing the proceeds of the sales of the public lands to the several States, to enable our State, in common with others, to dig canals and construct railroads without borrowing money and paying the interest on it.

If alive on the first Monday in November, I shall vote for Hugh L. White for President.

Very respectfully,

A. LINCOLN.

## LETTER TO ROBERT ALLEN

NEW SALEM, June 21, 1836.

*Dear Colonel:* I am told that during my absence last week you passed through this place, and stated publicly that you were in possession of a fact or facts which, if known to the public, would entirely destroy the prospects of N. W. Edwards and myself at the ensuing election; but that, through favor to us, you should forbear to divulge them. No one has needed favors

more than I, and, generally, few have been less unwilling to accept them; but in this case favor to me would be injustice to the public, and therefore I must beg your pardon for declining it. That I once had the confidence of the people of Sangamon, is sufficiently evident; and if I have since done anything, either by design or misadventure, which if known would subject me to a forfeiture of that confidence, he that knows of that thing, and conceals it, is a traitor to his country's interest.

I find myself wholly unable to form any conjecture of what fact or facts, real or supposed, you spoke; but my opinion of your veracity will not permit me for a moment to doubt that you at least believed what you said. I am flattered with the personal regard you manifested for me; but I do hope that, on more mature reflection, you will view the public interest as a paramount consideration, and therefore determine to let the worst come. I here assure you that the candid statement of facts on your part, however low it may sink me, shall never break the tie of personal friendship between us. I wish an answer to this, and you are at liberty to publish both, if you choose. Very respectfully,

A. LINCOLN.

COL. ROBERT ALLEN.



## LETTER TO MISS MARY OWENS

VANDALIA, December 13, 1836.

*Mary:* I have been sick ever since my arrival, or I should have written sooner. It is but little difference, however, as I have very little even yet to write. And more, the longer I can avoid the mortification of looking in the post-office for your letter and not finding it, the better. You see I am mad about that old letter yet. I don't like very well to risk you again. I'll try you once more, anyhow.

The new State House is not yet finished, and consequently the legislature is doing little or nothing. The governor delivered an inflammatory political message, and it is expected there will be some sparring between the parties about it as soon as the two Houses get to business. Taylor delivered up his petition for the new county to one of our members this morning. I am told he despairs of its success, on account of all the members from Morgan County opposing it. There are names enough on the petition, I think, to justify the members from our county in going for it; but if the members from Morgan oppose it, which they say they will, the chance will be bad.

Our chance to take the seat of government to Springfield is better than I expected. An inter-



nal-improvement convention was held here since we met, which recommended a loan of several millions of dollars, on the faith of the State, to construct railroads. Some of the legislature are for it, and some against it; which has the majority I cannot tell. There is great strife and struggling for the office of the United States Senator here at this time. It is probable we shall ease their pains in a few days. The opposition men have no candidate of their own, and consequently they will smile as complacently at the angry snarl of the contending Van Buren candidates and their respective friends as the Christian does at Satan's rage. You recollect that I mentioned at the outset of this letter that I had been unwell. That is the fact, though I believe I am about well now; but that, with other things I cannot account for, have conspired, and have gotten my spirits so low that I feel that I would rather be any place in the world than here. I really cannot endure the thought of staying here ten weeks. Write back as soon as you get this, and, if possible, say something that will please me, for really I have not been pleased since I left you. This letter is so dry and stupid that I am ashamed to send it, but with my present feelings I cannot do any better.

Give my best respects to Mr. and Mrs. Able and family. Your friend, LINCOLN.

\*SPEECH BEFORE THE ILLINOIS LEGISLATURE IN  
JANUARY, 1837<sup>1</sup>

*In the House of Representatives, upon the resolution offered by Mr. Linder, to institute an enquiry into the management of the affairs of the State Bank.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Lest I should fall into the too common error, of being mistaken in regard to which side I design to be upon, I shall make it my first care to remove all doubt on that point, by declaring that I am opposed to the resolution under consideration, in toto. Before I proceed to the body of the subject, I will further remark, that it is not without a considerable degree of apprehension, that I venture to cross the track of the gentleman from Coles (Mr. Linder). Indeed, I do not believe I could muster a sufficiency of courage to come in contact with that gentleman, were it not for the fact, that he, some days since, most graciously condescended to assure us that he would never be found wasting

<sup>1</sup> A speech found in the "Sangamon Journal" of January 28, 1837. That paper copied it from the Vandalia "Free Press."

ammunition on *small game*. On the same fortunate occasion, he further gave us to understand, that he regarded *himself* as being decidedly the *superior* of our common friend from Randolph (Mr. Shields) ; and feeling, as I really do, that I, to say the most of myself, am nothing more than the peer of our friend from Randolph, I shall regard the gentleman from Coles as decidedly my superior also, and consequently, in the course of what I shall have to say, whenever I shall have occasion to allude to that gentleman, I shall endeavor to adopt that kind of court language which I understand to be due to decided superiority. In one faculty, at least, there can be no dispute of the gentleman's superiority over me, and most other men ; and that is, the faculty of entangling a subject, so that neither himself, nor any other man, can find head or tail to it. Here he has introduced a resolution, embracing ninety-nine printed lines across common writing paper, and yet more than one half of his opening speech has been made upon subjects about which there is not one word said in his resolution.

Though his resolution embraces nothing in regard to the constitutionality of the Bank, much of what he has said has been with a view to make the impression that it was unconstitutional in its inception. Now, although I am satisfied that an ample field may be found within the pale of

the resolution, at least for small game, yet as the gentleman has travelled out of it, I feel that I may, with all due humility, venture to follow him. The gentleman has discovered that some gentleman at Washington city has been upon the very eve of deciding our Bank unconstitutional, and that he would probably have completed his very authentic decision, had not some one of the Bank officers placed his hand upon his mouth, and begged him to withhold it. The fact that the individuals composing our Supreme Court have, in an official capacity, decided in favor of the constitutionality of the Bank, would, in my mind, seem a sufficient answer to this. It is a fact known to all, that the members of the Supreme Court, together with the Governor, form a Council of Revision, and that this Council approved this Bank Charter. I ask, then, if the extrajudicial decision—not quite, but almost made, by the gentleman at Washington, before whom, by the way, the question of the constitutionality of our Bank never has, nor never can come—is to be taken as paramount to a decision officially made by that tribunal, by which and which alone, the constitutionality of the Bank can ever be settled? But aside from this view of the subject, I would ask, if the committee which this resolution proposes to appoint, are to examine into the constitutionality of the

Bank? Are they to be clothed with power to send for persons and papers, for this object? And after they have found the Bank to be unconstitutional, and decided it so, how are they to enforce their decision? What will their decision amount to? They cannot compel the Bank to cease operations, or to change the course of its operations. What good, then, can their labors result in? Certainly none.

The gentleman asks, if we, without an examination, shall, by giving the State deposits to the Bank, and by taking the stock reserved for the State, legalize its former misconduct? Now I do not pretend to possess sufficient legal knowledge to decide, whether a legislative enactment, proposing to, and accepting from, the Bank, certain terms, which would have the effect to legalize or wipe out its former errors, or not; but I can assure the gentleman, if such should be the effect, he has already got behind the settlement of accounts; for it is well known to all, that the Legislature, at its last session, passed a supplemental Bank charter, which the Bank has since accepted, and which, according to his doctrine, has legalized all the alleged violations of its original charter in the distribution of its stock.

I now proceed to the resolution. By examination it will be found that the first thirty-three lines, being precisely one third of the whole,

relate exclusively to the distribution of the stock by the commissioners appointed by the State. Now, sir, it is clear that no question can arise on this portion of the resolution, except a question between capitalists in regard to the ownership of stock. Some gentlemen have their stock in their hands, while others, who have more money than they know what to do with, want it; and this, and this alone, is the question to settle which we are called on to squander thousands of the people's money. What interest, let me ask, have the people in the settlement of this question? What difference is it to them whether the stock is owned by Judge Smith or Sam Wiggins? If any gentleman be entitled to stock in the Bank, which he is kept out of possession of by others, let him assert his right in the Supreme Court, and let him or his antagonist, whichever may be found in the wrong, pay the costs of suit. It is an old maxim, and a very sound one, that he that dances should always pay the fiddler. Now, sir, in the present case, if any gentleman, whose money is a burden to them, choose to lead off a dance, I am decidedly opposed to the people's money being used to pay the fiddler. No one can doubt that the examination proposed by this resolution, must cost the State some ten or twelve thousand dollars; and all this to settle a question in which the people have no interest, and about

which they care nothing. These capitalists generally act harmoniously and in concert, to fleece the people, and now, that they have got into a quarrel with themselves, we are called upon to appropriate the people's money to settle the quarrel.

I leave this part of the resolution and proceed to the remainder. It will be found that no charge in the remaining part of the resolution, if true, amounts to the violation of the Bank charter, except one, which I will notice in due time. It might seem quite sufficient to say no more upon any of these charges or insinuations, than enough to show they are not violations of the charter; yet, as they are ingeniously framed and handled, with a view to deceive and mislead, I will notice in their order, all the most prominent of them. The first of these is in relation to a connection between our Bank and several banking institutions in other States. Admitting this connection to exist, I should like to see the gentleman from Coles, or any other gentleman, undertake to show that there is any harm in it. What can there be in such a connection, that the people of Illinois are willing to pay their money to get a peep into? By a reference to the tenth section of the Bank charter, any gentleman can see that the framers of the act contemplated the holding of stock in the institutions of other cor-



porations. Why, then, is it, when neither law nor justice forbids it, that we are asked to spend our time and money, in inquiring into its truth?

The next charge, in the order of time, is, that some officer, director, clerk or servant of the Bank, has been required to take an oath of secrecy in relation to the affairs of said Bank. Now, I do not know whether this be true or false—neither do I believe any honest man cares. I know that the seventh section of the charter expressly guarantees to the Bank the right of making, under certain restrictions, such by-laws as it may think fit; and I further know that the requiring an oath of secrecy would not transcend those restrictions. What, then, if the Bank has chosen to exercise this right? Who can it injure? Does not every merchant have his secret mark? and who is ever silly enough to complain of it? I presume if the Bank does require any such oath of secrecy, it is done through a motive of delicacy to those individuals who deal with it. Why, sir, not many days since, one gentleman upon this floor, who, by the way, I have no doubt is now ready to join this hue and cry against the Bank, indulged in a philippic against one of the Bank officials, because, as he said, he had *divulged a secret*.

Immediately following this last charge, there are several insinuations in the resolution, which

are too silly to require any sort of notice, were it not for the fact, that they conclude by saying, "*to the great injury of the people at large.*" In answer to this I would say that it is strange enough that the people are suffering these "great injuries," and yet are not sensible of it! Singular indeed that the people should be writhing under oppression and injury, and yet not one among them to be found to raise the voice of complaint. If the Bank be inflicting injury upon the people, why is it that not a single petition is presented to this body on the subject? If the Bank really be a grievance, why is it that no one of the real people is found to ask redress of it? The truth is, no such oppression exists. If it did, our people would groan with memorials and petitions, and we would not be permitted to rest day or night till we had put it down. The people know their rights, and they are never slow to assert and maintain them, when they are invaded. Let them call for an investigation, and I shall ever stand ready to respond to the call. But they have made no such call. I make the assertion boldly, and without fear of contradiction, that no man, who does not hold an office, or does not aspire to one, has ever found any fault of the Bank. It has doubled the prices of the products of their farms, and filled their pockets with a sound circulating medium, and they are

all well pleased with its operations. No, sir, it is the politician who is the first to sound the alarm (which, by the way, is a false one). It is he who, by these unholy means, is endeavoring to blow up a storm that he may ride upon and direct. It is he, and he alone, that here proposes to spend thousands of the people's public treasure, for no other advantage to them than to make valueless in their pockets the reward of their industry. Mr. Chairman, this work is exclusively the work of politicians; a set of men who have interests aside from the interests of the people, and who, to say the most of them, are, taken as a mass, at least one long step removed from honest men. I say this with the greater freedom because, being a politician myself, none can regard it as personal.

Again, it is charged, or rather insinuated, that officers of the Bank have loaned money at usurious rates of interest. Suppose this to be true, are we to send a committee of this House to enquire into it? Suppose the committee should find it true, can they redress the injured individuals? Assuredly not. If any individual had been injured in this way, is there not an ample remedy to be found in the laws of the land? Does the gentleman from Coles know that there is a statute standing in full force, making it highly penal, for an individual to loan money at a

higher rate of interest than twelve per cent? If he does not he is too ignorant to be placed at the head of the committee which his resolution proposes; and if he does, his neglect to mention it shows him to be too uncandid to merit the respect or confidence of any one.

But besides all this, if the Bank were struck from existence, could not the owners of the capital still loan it usuriously as well as now? Whatever the Bank, or its officers, may have done, I know that usurious transactions were much more frequent and enormous before the commencement of its operations than they have ever been since.

The next insinuation is, that the Bank has refused specie payments. This, if true, is a violation of the charter. But there is not the least probability of its truth; because, if such had been the fact, the individual to whom payment was refused would have had an interest in making it public, by suing for the damages to which the charter entitles him. Yet no such thing has been done; and the strong presumption is, that the insinuation is false and groundless.

From this to the end of the resolution, there is nothing that merits attention—I therefore drop the particular examination of it.

By a general view of the resolution, it will be seen that a principal object of the committee is

to examine into, and ferret out, a mass of corruption, supposed to have been committed by the commissioners who apportioned the stock of the Bank. I believe it is universally understood and acknowledged that all men will ever act correctly unless they have a motive to do otherwise. If this be true, we can only suppose that the commissioners acted corruptly, by also supposing that they were bribed to do so. Taking this view of the subject, I would ask if the Bank is likely to find it more difficult to bribe the committee of seven, which we are about to appoint, than it may have found it to bribe the commissioners?

(Here Mr. Linder called to order. The Chair decided that Mr. Lincoln was not out of order. Mr. Linder appealed to the House; but before the question was put, withdrew his appeal, saying he preferred to let the gentleman go on; he thought he would break his own neck. Mr. Lincoln proceeded):

Another *gracious condescension*; I acknowledge it with gratitude. I know I was not out of order; and I know every sensible man in the House knows it. I was not saying that the gentleman from Coles could not (?) be bribed, nor, on the other hand, will I say he could not. In that particular I leave him where I found him. I was only endeavoring to show that there was

at least as great a probability of *any* seven members that could be selected from this House being bribed to act corruptly, as there was that the twenty-four commissioners had been so bribed. By a reference to the ninth section of the Bank charter, it will be seen that those commissioners were John Tilson, Robert K. McLaughlin, Daniel Wann, A. G. S. Wight, John C. Riley, W. H. Davidson, Edward M. Wilson, Edward L. Pier-son, Robert R. Green, Ezra Baker, Aquilla Wren, John Taylor, Samuel C. Christy, Edmund Roberts, Benjamin Godfrey, Thomas Mather, A. M. Jenkins, W. Linn, W. S. Gilman, Charles Prentice, Richard I. Hamilton, A. H. Buckner, W. F. Thornton and Edmund D. Taylor.

These are twenty-four of the most respectable men in the State. Probably no twenty-four men could be selected in the State with whom the people are better acquainted, or in whose honor and integrity they would more readily place confidence. And I now repeat that there is less probability that those men have been bribed and corrupted than that *any* seven men, or rather any *six* men, that could be selected from the members of this House, might be so bribed and corrupted; even though they were headed and led on by "decided superiority" himself.

In all seriousness, I ask every reasonable man

if an issue be joined by these twenty-four commissioners on the one part, and *any* other seven men on the other part, and the whole depend upon the honor and integrity of the contending parties, to which party would the greatest degree of credit be due? Again: Another consideration is, that we have no right to make the examination. What I shall say upon this head, I design exclusively for the law-loving and law-abiding part of the House. To those who claim omnipotence for the Legislature, and who in the plentitude of their assumed powers are disposed to disregard the Constitution, law, good faith, moral right, and everything else, I have not a word to say. But to the law-abiding part I say, examine the Bank charter, go examine the Constitution; go examine the acts that the General Assembly of this State has passed, and you will find just as much authority given in each and every of them, to compel the Bank to bring its coffers to this hall and to pour their contents upon this floor, as to compel it to submit to this examination which this resolution proposes. Why, sir, the gentleman from Coles, the mover of this resolution, very lately denied on this floor that the Legislature had any right to repeal, or otherwise meddle with its own acts, when those acts were made in the nature of contracts, and had been accepted and acted on by other parties.



Now I ask, if this resolution does not propose, for this House alone, to do what he, but the other day, denied the right of the whole Legislature to do? He must either abandon the position he then took or he must now vote against his own resolution. It is no difference to me, and I presume but little to any one else, which he does.

I am by no means the special advocate of the Bank. I have long thought that it would be well for it to report its condition to the General Assembly, and that cases might occur, when it might be proper to make an examination of its affairs by a committee. Accordingly, during the last session, while a bill supplemental to the Bank charter was pending before the House, I offered an amendment to the same, in these words: "The said corporation shall, at the next session of the General Assembly, and at each subsequent General Session, during the existence of its charter, report to the same the amount of debts due *from* said corporation; the amount of debts due *to* the same; the amount of specie in its vaults, and an account of all lands then owned by the same, and the amount for which such lands have been taken; and moreover, if said corporation shall at any time neglect or refuse to submit its books, papers, and all and everything necessary for a full and fair examination of its affairs, to any person or persons appointed by the General As-

sembly, for the purpose of making such examination, the said corporation shall forfeit its charter."

This amendment was negatived by a vote of 34 to 15. Eleven of the 34 who voted against it are now members of this House; and though it would be out of order to call their names, I hope they will all recollect themselves, and not vote for this examination to be made without authority, inasmuch as they refused to receive the authority when it was in their power to do so.

I have said that cases might occur when an examination might be proper; but I do not believe any such case has now occurred; and if it has, I should still be opposed to making an examination without legal authority. I am opposed to encouraging that lawless and mobocratic spirit, whether in relation to the Bank or anything else, which is already abroad in the land; and is spreading with rapid and fearful impetuosity to the ultimate overthrow of every institution, of even moral principle, in which persons and property have hitherto found security.

But supposing we had the authority, I would ask what good can result from the examination? Can we declare the Bank unconstitutional, and compel it to desist from the abuses of its power, provided we find such abuses to exist? Can we

repair the injuries which it may have done to individuals? Most certainly we can do none of these things. Why, then, shall we spend the public money in such employment? O, say the examiners, we can injure the credit of the Bank, if nothing else. Please tell me, gentlemen, who will suffer most by that? You cannot injure, to any extent, the stockholders. They are men of wealth—of large capital; and consequently, beyond the power of malice. But by injuring the credit of the Bank you will depreciate the value of its paper in the hands of the honest and unsuspecting farmer and mechanic, and that is all you can do. But suppose you could affect your whole purpose; suppose you could wipe the Bank from existence, which is the grand *ultimatum* of the project, what would be the consequence? Why, sir, we should spend several thousand dollars of the public treasure in the operation, annihilate the currency of the State; render valueless in the hands of our people that reward of their former labors; and finally, be once more under the comfortable obligation of paying the Wiggins' loan, principal and interest.

ADDRESS BEFORE THE YOUNG MEN'S LYCEUM  
OF SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, January 27, 1837<sup>1</sup>

**A**S A SUBJECT for the remarks of the evening, "The perpetuation of our political institutions" is selected.

In the great journal of things happening under the sun, we, the American people, find our account running under date of the nineteenth century of the Christian era. We find ourselves in the peaceful possession of the fairest portion of the earth as regards extent of territory, fertility of soil, and salubrity of climate. We find ourselves under the government of a system of political institutions conducing more essentially to the ends of civil and religious liberty than any of which the history of former times tells us. We, when mounting the stage of existence, found ourselves the legal inheritors of these fundamental blessings. We toiled not in the acquirement or establishment of them; they are a legacy

<sup>1</sup> In the autumn of 1836, Lincoln, in conjunction with a few prominent young men, formed a young men's lyceum for mutual improvement. His speech delivered before this club is one of the earliest preserved to us. It appeared in the "Sangamon Journal" for February 3, 1838.

bequeathed us by a once hardy, brave, and patriotic, but now lamented and departed, race of ancestors. Theirs was the task (and nobly they performed it) to possess themselves, and through themselves us, of this goodly land, and to uprear upon its hills and its valleys a political edifice of liberty and equal rights; 'tis ours only to transmit these—the former unprofaned by the foot of an invader, the latter undecayed by the lapse of time and untorn by usurpation—to the latest generation that fate shall permit the world to know. This task of gratitude to our fathers, justice to ourselves, duty to posterity, and love for our species in general, all imperatively require us faithfully to perform.

How then shall we perform it? At what point shall we expect the approach of danger? By what means shall we fortify against it? Shall we expect some transatlantic military giant to step the ocean and crush us at a blow? Never! All the armies of Europe, Asia, and Africa combined, with all the treasure of the earth (our own excepted) in their military chest, with a Bonaparte for a commander, could not by force take a drink from the Ohio or make a track on the Blue Ridge in a trial of a thousand years.

At what point, then, is the approach of danger to be expected? I answer, If it ever reach us it must spring up amongst us; it cannot come







from abroad. If destruction be our lot we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen we must live through all time, or die by suicide.

I hope I am over wary; but if I am not, there is even now something of ill omen amongst us. I mean the increasing disregard for law which pervades the country—the growing disposition to substitute the wild and furious passions in lieu of the sober judgment of courts, and the worse than savage mobs for the executive ministers of justice. This disposition is awfully fearful in any community; and that it now exists in ours, though grating to our feelings to admit, it would be a violation of truth and an insult to our intelligence to deny. Accounts of outrages committed by mobs form the every-day news of the times. They have pervaded the country from New England to Louisiana; they are neither peculiar to the eternal snows of the former nor the burning suns of the latter; they are not the creature of climate, neither are they confined to the slaveholding or the non-slaveholding States. Alike they spring up among the pleasure-hunting masters of Southern slaves, and the order-loving citizens of the land of steady habits. Whatever then their cause may be, it is common to the whole country.

It would be tedious as well as useless to re-

count the horrors of all of them. Those happening in the State of Mississippi and at St. Louis are perhaps the most dangerous in example and revolting to humanity. In the Mississippi case they first commenced by hanging the regular gamblers—a set of men certainly not following for a livelihood a very useful or very honest occupation, but one which, so far from being forbidden by the laws, was actually licensed by an act of the Legislature passed but a single year before. Next, negroes suspected of conspiring to raise an insurrection were caught up and hanged in all parts of the State; then, white men supposed to be leagued with the negroes; and finally, strangers from neighboring States, going thither on business, were in many instances subjected to the same fate. Thus went on this process of hanging, from gamblers to negroes, from negroes to white citizens, and from these to strangers, till dead men were seen literally dangling from the boughs of trees upon every roadside, and in numbers almost sufficient to rival the native Spanish moss of the country as a drapery of the forest.

Turn, then, to that horror-striking scene at St. Louis. A single victim only was sacrificed there. This story is very short, and is perhaps the most highly tragic of anything of its length that has ever been witnessed in real life. A

mulatto man by the name of McIntosh was seized in the street, dragged to the suburbs of the city, chained to a tree, and actually burned to death; and all within a single hour from the time he had been a freeman attending to his own business and at peace with the world.

Such are the effects of mob law, and such are the scenes becoming more and more frequent in this land so lately famed for love of law and order, and the stories of which have even now grown too familiar to attract anything more than an idle remark.

But you are perhaps ready to ask, "What has this to do with the perpetuation of our political institutions?" I answer, "It has much to do with it." Its direct consequences are, comparatively speaking, but a small evil, and much of its danger consists in the proneness of our minds to regard its direct as its only consequences. Abstractly considered, the hanging of the gamblers at Vicksburg was of but little consequence. They constitute a portion of population that is worse than useless in any community; and their death, if no pernicious example be set by it, is never matter of reasonable regret with any one. If they were annually swept from the stage of existence by the plague or smallpox, honest men would perhaps be much profited by the operation. Similar, too, is the correct reasoning in

regard to the burning of the negro at St. Louis. He had forfeited his life by the perpetration of an outrageous murder upon one of the most worthy and respectable citizens of the city, and had he not died as he did, he must have died by the sentence of the law in a very short time afterward. As to him alone, it was as well the way it was as it could otherwise have been. But the example in either case was fearful. When men take it in their heads to-day to hang gamblers or burn murderers, they should recollect that in the confusion usually attending such transactions they will be as likely to hang or burn some one who is neither a gambler nor a murderer as one who is, and that, acting upon the example they set, the mob of to-morrow may, and probably will, hang or burn some of them by the very same mistake. And not only so; the innocent, those who have ever set their faces against violations of law in every shape, alike with the guilty fall victims to the ravages of mob law; and thus it goes up, step by step, till all the walls erected for the defense of the persons and property of individuals are trodden down and disregarded. But all this, even, is not the full extent of the evil. By such examples, by instances of the perpetrators of such acts going unpunished, the lawless in spirit are encouraged to become lawless in practice; and having been

used to no restraint but dread of punishment, they thus become absolutely unrestrained. Having ever regarded government as their deadliest bane, they make a jubilee of the suspension of its operations, and pray for nothing so much as its total annihilation. While, on the other hand, good men, men who love tranquillity, who desire to abide by the laws and enjoy their benefits, who would gladly spill their blood in the defense of their country, seeing their property destroyed, their families insulted, and their lives endangered, their persons injured, and seeing nothing in prospect that forebodes a change for the better, become tired of and disgusted with a government that offers them no protection, and are not much averse to a change in which they imagine they have nothing to lose. Thus, then, by the operation of this mobocratic spirit which all must admit is now abroad in the land, the strongest bulwark of any government, and particularly of those constituted like ours, may effectually be broken down and destroyed—I mean the attachment of the people. Whenever this effect shall be produced among us; whenever the vicious portion of population shall be permitted to gather in bands of hundreds and thousands, and burn churches, ravage and rob provision-stores, throw printing-presses into rivers, shoot editors, and hang and burn ob-

noxious persons at pleasure and with impunity, depend on it, this government cannot last. By such things the feelings of the best citizens will become more or less alienated from it, and thus it will be left without friends, or with too few, and those few too weak to make their friendship effectual. At such a time, and under such circumstances, men of sufficient talent and ambition will not be wanting to seize the opportunity, strike the blow, and overturn that fair fabric which for the last half century has been the fondest hope of the lovers of freedom throughout the world.

I know the American people are much attached to their government; I know they would suffer much for its sake; I know they would endure evils long and patiently before they would ever think of exchanging it for another—yet, notwithstanding all this, if the laws be continually despised and disregarded, if their rights to be secure in their persons and property are held by no better tenure than the caprice of a mob, the alienation of their affections from the government is the natural consequence; and to that, sooner or later, it must come.

Here, then, is one point at which danger may be expected.

The question recurs, "How shall we fortify against it?" The answer is simple. Let every

American, every lover of liberty, every well-wisher to his posterity swear by the blood of the Revolution never to violate in the least particular the laws of the country, and never to tolerate their violation by others. As the patriots of seventy-six did to the support of the Declaration of Independence, so to the support of the Constitution and laws let every American pledge his life, his property, and his sacred honor—let every man remember that to violate the law is to trample on the blood of his father, and to tear the charter of his own and his children's liberty. Let reverence for the laws be breathed by every American mother to the lisping babe that prattles on her lap; let it be taught in schools, in seminaries, and in colleges; let it be written in primers, spelling-books, and in almanacs; let it be preached from the pulpit, proclaimed in legislative halls, and enforced in courts of justice. And, in short, let it become the political religion of the nation; and let the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the grave and the gay of all sexes and tongues and colors and conditions, sacrifice unceasingly upon its altars.

While ever a state of feeling such as this shall universally or even very generally prevail throughout the nation, vain will be every effort, and fruitless every attempt, to subvert our national freedom.



When I so pressingly urge a strict observance of all the laws, let me not be understood as saying there are no bad laws, or that grievances may not arise for the redress of which no legal provisions have been made. I mean to say no such thing. But I do mean to say that although bad laws, if they exist, should be repealed as soon as possible, still, while they continue in force, for the sake of example they should be religiously observed. So also in unprovided cases. If such arise, let proper legal provisions be made for them with the least possible delay, but till then let them, if not too intolerable, be borne with.

There is no grievance that is a fit object of redress by mob law. In any case that may arise, as, for instance, the promulgation of abolitionism, one of two positions is necessarily true—that is, the thing is right within itself, and therefore deserves the protection of all law and all good citizens, or it is wrong, and therefore proper to be prohibited by legal enactments; and in neither case is the interposition of mob law either necessary, justifiable, or excusable.

But it may be asked, “Why suppose danger to our political institutions? Have we not preserved them for more than fifty years? And why may we not for fifty times as long?”

We hope there is no sufficient reason. We

hope all danger may be overcome; but to conclude that no danger may ever arise would itself be extremely dangerous. There are now, and will hereafter be, many causes, dangerous in their tendency, which have not existed heretofore, and which are not too insignificant to merit attention. That our government should have been maintained in its original form, from its establishment until now, is not much to be wondered at. It had many props to support it through that period, which now are decayed and crumbled away. Through that period it was felt by all to be an undecided experiment; now it is understood to be a successful one. Then, all that sought celebrity and fame and distinction expected to find them in the success of that experiment. Their all was staked upon it; their destiny was inseparably linked with it. Their ambition aspired to display before an admiring world a practical demonstration of the truth of a proposition which had hitherto been considered at best no better than problematical—namely, the capability of a people to govern themselves. If they succeeded they were to be immortalized; their names were to be transferred to counties, and cities, and rivers, and mountains; and to be revered and sung, toasted through all time. If they failed, they were to be called knaves, and fools, and fanatics for a fleet-

ing hour; then to sink and be forgotten. They succeeded. The experiment is successful, and thousands have won their deathless names in making it so. But the game is caught; and I believe it is true that with the catching end the pleasures of the chase. This field of glory is harvested, and the crop is already appropriated. But new reapers will arise, and they too will seek a field. It is to deny what the history of the world tells us is true, to suppose that men of ambition and talents will not continue to spring up amongst us. And when they do, they will as naturally seek the gratification of their ruling passion as others have done before them. The question then is, Can that gratification be found in supporting and maintaining an edifice that has been erected by others? Most certainly it cannot. Many great and good men, sufficiently qualified for any task they should undertake, may ever be found whose ambition would aspire to nothing beyond a seat in Congress, a gubernatorial or a presidential chair; but such belong not to the family of the lion, or the tribe of the eagle. What! think you these places would satisfy an Alexander, a Cæsar, or a Napoleon? Never! Towering genius disdains a beaten path. It seeks regions hitherto unexplored. It sees no distinction in adding story to story upon the monuments of fame erected

to the memory of others. It denies that it is glory enough to serve under any chief. It scorns to tread in the footsteps of any predecessor, however illustrious. It thirsts and burns for distinction; and if possible, it will have it, whether at the expense of emancipating slaves or enslaving freemen. Is it unreasonable, then, to expect that some man possessed of the loftiest genius, coupled with ambition sufficient to push it to its utmost stretch, will at some time spring up among us? And when such an one does, it will require the people to be united with each other, attached to the government and laws, and generally intelligent, to successfully frustrate his designs.

Distinction will be his paramount object, and although he would as willingly, perhaps more so, acquire it by doing good as harm, yet, that opportunity being past, and nothing left to be done in the way of building up, he would set boldly to the task of pulling down.

Here then is a probable case, highly dangerous, and such an one as could not have well existed heretofore.

Another reason which once was, but which, to the same extent, is now no more, has done much in maintaining our institutions thus far. I mean the powerful influence which the interesting scenes of the Revolution had upon the passions

of the people as distinguished from their judgment. By this influence, the jealousy, envy, and avarice incident to our nature, and so common to a state of peace, prosperity, and conscious strength, were for the time in a great measure smothered and rendered inactive, while the deep-rooted principles of hate, and the powerful motive of revenge, instead of being turned against each other, were directed exclusively against the British nation. And thus, from the force of circumstances, the basest principles of our nature were either made to lie dormant, or to become the active agents in the advancement of the noblest of causes—that of establishing and maintaining civil and religious liberty.

But this state of feeling must fade, is fading, had faded, with the circumstances that produced it.

I do not mean to say that the scenes of the Revolution are now or ever will be entirely forgotten, but that, like everything else, they must fade upon the memory of the world, and grow more and more dim by the lapse of time. In history, we hope, they will be read of, and recounted, so long as the Bible shall be read; but even granting that they will, their influence cannot be what it heretofore has been. Even then they cannot be so universally known nor so

vividly felt as they were by the generation just gone to rest. At the close of that struggle, nearly every adult male had been a participator in some of its scenes. The consequence was that of those scenes, in the form of a husband, a father, a son, or a brother, a living history was to be found in every family—a history bearing the indubitable testimonies of its own authenticity, in the limbs mangled, in the scars of wounds received, in the midst of the very scenes related—a history, too, that could be read and understood alike by all, the wise and the ignorant, the learned and the unlearned. But those histories are gone. They can be read no more forever. They were a fortress of strength; but what invading foeman could never do, the silent artillery of time has done—the leveling of its walls. They are gone. They were a forest of giant oaks; but the all-resistless hurricane has swept over them, and left only here and there a lonely trunk, despoiled of its verdure, shorn of its foliage, unshading and unshaded, to murmur in a few more gentle breezes, and to combat with its mutilated limbs a few more ruder storms, then to sink and be no more.

They were pillars of the temple of liberty; and now that they have crumbled away that temple must fall unless we, their descendants, supply their places with other pillars, hewn from the

solid quarry of sober reason. Passion has helped us, but can do so no more. It will in future be our enemy. Reason—cold, calculating, unimpassioned reason—must furnish all the materials for our future support and defense. Let those materials be molded into general intelligence, sound morality, and, in particular, a reverence for the Constitution and laws; and that we improved to the last, that we remained free to the last, that we revered his name to the last, that during his long sleep we permitted no hostile foot to pass over or desecrate his resting-place, shall be that which to learn the last trump shall awaken our Washington.

Upon these let the proud fabric of freedom rest, as the rock of its basis; and as truly as has been said of the only greater institution, “the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”



PROTEST IN THE ILLINOIS LEGISLATURE ON THE  
SUBJECT OF SLAVERY<sup>1</sup>

March 3, 1837.

THE FOLLOWING protest was presented to the House, which was read and ordered to be spread on the journals, to-wit:

Resolutions upon the subject of domestic slavery having passed both branches of the General Assembly at its present session, the undersigned hereby protest against the passage of the same.

They believe that the institution of slavery is

<sup>1</sup> North and South were beginning to be much exercised over the question of the slave. In 1837 Illinois witnessed the killing of an anti-slavery editor, Elijah Lovejoy. Abolition societies were formed in various quarters. The Illinois Assembly disapproved of these societies and their influence. On March 3rd it passed the following resolutions:

"Resolved by the General Assembly of the State of Illinois:

"That we highly disapprove of the formation of Abolition societies, and of the doctrines promulgated by them.

"That the right of property in slaves is sacred to the slaveholding States by the Federal Constitution, and that they cannot be deprived of that right without their consent.

"That the General Government cannot abolish slavery in the District of Columbia against the consent of the citizens of said District, without a manifest breach of good faith.

"That the governor be requested to transmit to the States of

founded on both injustice and bad policy, but that the promulgation of abolition doctrines tends rather to increase than abate its evils.

They believe that the Congress of the United States has no power under the Constitution to interfere with the institution of slavery in the different States.

They believe that the Congress of the United States has the power, under the Constitution, to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, but that the power ought not to be exercised, unless at the request of the people of the District.

The difference between these opinions and those contained in the said resolutions is their reason for entering this protest.

DAN STONE,

A. LINCOLN,

*Representatives from the County of Sangamon.*

## LETTER TO MISS MARY OWENS

SPRINGFIELD, May 7, 1837.

MISS MARY S. OWENS.

*Friend Mary:* I have commenced two let-

ter, one to Virginia, Alabama, Mississippi, New York and Connecticut a copy of the foregoing report and resolutions."

It was against these resolutions that Lincoln and Stone (the only other man in Assembly who had the courage to concur) protested. In W. E. Curtis's opinion this was "the first formal declaration against the system of slavery that was made in any legislative body in the United States, at least west of the Hudson River."

ters to send you before this, both of which displeased me before I got half done, and so I tore them up. The first I thought was not serious enough, and the second was on the other extreme. I shall send this, turn out as it may.

This thing of living in Springfield is rather a dull business, after all; at least it is to me. I am quite as lonesome here as I ever was anywhere in my life. I have been spoken to by but one woman since I have been here, and should not have been by her if she could have avoided it. I've never been to church yet, and probably shall not be soon. I stay away because I am conscious I should not know how to behave myself.

I am often thinking of what we said about your coming to live at Springfield. I am afraid you would not be satisfied. There is a great deal of flourishing about in carriages here, which it would be your doom to see without sharing it. You would have to be poor, without the means of hiding your poverty. Do you believe you could bear that patiently? Whatever woman may cast her lot with mine, should any ever do so, it is my intention to do all in my power to make her happy and contented; and there is nothing I can imagine that would make me more unhappy than to fail in the effort. I know I should be much happier with you than

the way I am, provided I saw no signs of discontent in you. What you have said to me may have been in the way of jest, or I may have misunderstood it. If so, then let it be forgotten; if otherwise, I much wish you would think seriously before you decide. What I have said I will most positively abide by, provided you wish it. My opinion is that you had better not do it. You have not been accustomed to hardship, and it may be more severe than you now imagine. I know you are capable of thinking correctly on any subject, and if you deliberate maturely upon this before you decide, then I am willing to abide your decision.

You must write me a good long letter after you get this. You have nothing else to do, and though it might not seem interesting to you after you had written it, it would be a good deal of company to me in this "busy wilderness." Tell your sister I don't want to hear any more about selling out and moving. That gives me the "hypo" whenever I think of it. Yours, etc.,  
LINCOLN.

\*LETTER TO JOHN BENNETT

SPRINGFIELD, ILL., Aug. 5, 1837.

JOHN BENNETT, ESQ.

*Dear Sir:* Mr. Edwards tells me you wish to know whether the act to which your town in-

corporation provision was attached passed into a law. It did. You can organize under the general incorporation law as soon as you choose. I also tacked a provision on to a fellow's bill to authorize the re-location of the road from Salem down to your town, but I am not certain whether or not the bill passed, neither do I suppose I can ascertain before the law will be published, if it is a law. Bowling Greene, Bennett Abell, and yourself are appointed to make the change.

No news. No excitement except a little about the election of Monday next. I suppose of course our friend, Dr. Henry, stands no chance in your "diggings."

Your friend and humble servant,

A. LINCOLN.

#### LETTER TO MISS MARY OWENS

SPRINGFIELD, August 16, 1837.

*Friend Mary:* You will no doubt think it rather strange that I should write you a letter on the same day on which we parted, and I can only account for it by supposing that seeing you lately makes me think of you more than usual; while at our late meeting we had but few expressions of thoughts. You must know that I cannot see you or think of you with entire indifference; and yet it may be that you are mis-

taken in regard to what my real feelings toward you are. If I knew you were not, I should not trouble you with this letter. Perhaps any other man would know enough without further information; but I consider it my peculiar right to plead ignorance, and your bounden duty to allow the plea. I want in all cases to do right, and most particularly so in all cases with women. I want at this particular time, more than anything else, to do right with you; and if I knew it would be doing right, as I rather suspect it would, to let you alone, I would do it. And for the purpose of making the matter as plain as possible, I now say that you can now drop the subject, dismiss your thoughts (if you ever had any) from me forever, and leave this letter unanswered, without calling forth one accusing murmur from me. And I will even go further, and say that if it will add anything to your comfort or peace of mind to do so, it is my sincere wish that you should. Do not understand by this that I wish to cut your acquaintance. I mean no such thing. What I do wish is that our further acquaintance shall depend upon yourself. If such further acquaintance would contribute nothing to your happiness, I am sure it would not to mine. If you feel yourself in any degree bound to me, I am now willing to release you, provided you wish it; while, on the

other hand, I am willing and even anxious to bind you faster, if I can be convinced that it will, in any considerable degree, add to your happiness. This, indeed, is the whole question with me. Nothing would make me more miserable than to believe you miserable — nothing more happy than to know you were so.

In what I have now said, I think I cannot be misunderstood, and to make myself understood is the only object of this letter.

If it suits you best to not answer this, farewell. A long life and a merry one attend you. But if you conclude to write back, speak as plainly as I do. There can be neither harm nor danger in saying to me anything you think, just in the manner you think it.

My respects to your sister. Your friend,  
LINCOLN.

\*HAND BILL TO THE SANGAMON JOURNAL, August 19, 1837

#### TO THE PEOPLE

In accordance with our determination, as expressed last week, we present to the reader the articles which were published in hand-bill form, in reference to the case of the heirs of Joseph Anderson vs. James Adams. These articles can



now be read, uninfluenced by personal or party feeling, and with the sole motive of learning the truth. When that is done, the reader can pass his own judgment on the matters at issue.

We only regret in this case, that the publications were not made some weeks before the election. Such a course might have prevented the expressions of regret, which have often been heard since, from different individuals, on account of the disposition they made of their votes.

### TO THE PUBLIC

It is well known to most of you, that there is existing at this time, considerable excitement in regard to Gen. Adams's titles to certain tracts of land, and the manner in which he acquired them. As I understand, the General charges that the whole has been gotten up by a knot of lawyers to injure his election; and as I am one of the knot to which he refers—and as I happen to be in possession of facts connected with the matter, I will, in as brief a manner as possible, make a statement of them, together with the means by which I arrived at the knowledge of them.

Sometime in May or June last, a widow woman, by the name of Anderson, and her son, who resides in Fulton county, came to Spring-

field, for the purpose, as they said, of selling a ten acre lot of ground lying near town, which they claimed as the property of the deceased husband and father.

When they reached town they found the land was claimed by Gen. Adams. John T. Stuart and myself were employed to look into the matter, and if it was thought we could do so with any prospect of success, to commence a suit for the land. I went immediately to the recorder's office to examine Adams's title, and found that the land had been entered by one Dixon, deeded by Dixon to Thomas, by Thomas to one Miller, and by Miller to Gen. Adams. The oldest of these three deeds was about ten or eleven years old, and the latest more than five, all recorded at the same time, and that within less than one year. This I thought a suspicious circumstance, and I was thereby induced to examine the deeds very closely, with a view to the discovery of some defect by which to overturn the title, being almost convinced then it was founded in fraud. I finally discovered that in the deed from Thomas to Miller, although Miller's name stood in a sort of marginal note on the record book, it was nowhere in the deed itself. I told the fact to Talbott, the recorder, and proposed to him that he should go to Gen. Adams's and get the original deed, and compare it with the re-

cord, and thereby ascertain whether the defect was in the original, or there was merely an error in the recording. As Talbott afterwards told me, he went to the General's, but not finding him at home, got the deed from his son, which, when compared with the record, proved what we had discovered was merely an error of the recorder. After Mr. Talbott corrected the record, he brought the original to our office, as I then thought and think yet, to show us that it was right. When he came into the room he handed the deed to me, remarking that the fault was all his own. On opening it, another paper fell out of it, which on examination, proved to be an assignment of a judgment in the Circuit Court of Sangamon County from Joseph Anderson, the late husband of the widow above named, to James Adams, the judgment being in favor of said Anderson against one Joseph Miller. Knowing that this judgment had some connection with the land affair, I immediately took a copy of it, which is word for word, letter for letter and cross for cross as follows:

“Joseph Anderson, *vs.* Joseph Miller.

Judgment in Sangamon Circuit Court against Joseph Miller obtained on a note originally 25 dolls and interest thereon accrued.

I assign all my right, title and interest to James Adams which is in consideration of a debt I owe said Adams.

his  
JOSEPH X ANDERSON.  
mark."

May 10th, 1827.

As the copy shows, it bore date May 10, 1827; although the judgment assigned by it was not obtained until the October afterwards, as may be seen by any one on the records of the Circuit Court. Two other strange circumstances attended it which cannot be represented by a copy. One of them was, that the date "1827" had first been made "1837" and without the figure "3" being fully obliterated, the figure "2" had afterwards been made on top of it; the other was that, although the date was ten years old, the writing on it, from the freshness of its appearance, was thought by many, and I believe by all who saw it, not to be more than a week old. The paper on which it was written had a very old appearance; and there were some old figures on the back of it which made the freshness of the writing on the face of it, much more striking than I suppose it otherwise might have been. The reader's curiosity is no doubt excited to know what connection this assignment had with the

land in question. The story is this: Dixon sold and deeded the land to Thomas:—Thomas sold it to Anderson; but before he gave a deed, Anderson sold it to Miller, and took Miller's note for the purchase money.—When this note became due, Anderson sued Miller on it, and Miller procured an injunction from the Court of Chancery to stay the collection of the money until he should get a deed for the land. Gen. Adams was employed as an attorney by Anderson in this chancery suit, and at the October term, 1827, the injunction was dissolved, and a judgment given in favor of Anderson against Miller; and it was provided that Thomas was to execute a deed for the land in favor of Miller, and deliver it to Gen. Adams, to be held up by him till Miller paid the judgment, and then to deliver it to him. Miller left the county without paying the judgment. Anderson moved to Fulton county, where he has since died. When the widow came to Springfield last May or June, as before mentioned, and found the land deeded to Gen. Adams by Miller, she was naturally led to inquire why the money due upon the judgment had not been sent to them, inasmuch as he, Gen. Adams, had no authority to deliver Thomas's deed to Miller until the money was paid. Then it was the General told her, or perhaps her son, who came with her, that Anderson,

in his lifetime, *had assigned the judgment to him*, Gen. Adams. I am now told that the General is exhibiting an assignment of the same judgment bearing date "1828;" and in other respects differing from the one described; and that he is asserting that no such assignment as the one copied by me ever existed; or if there did, it was forged between Talbott and the lawyers, and slipped into his papers for the purpose of injuring him. Now, I can only say that I know precisely such a one did exist, and that Ben. Talbott, Wm. Butler, C. R. Matheny, John T. Stuart, Judge Logan, Robert Irwin, P. C. Canedy and S. M. Tinsley, all saw and examined it, and that at least one half of them will swear that *IT WAS IN GENERAL ADAMS'S HANDWRITING!!* And further, I know that Talbott will swear that he got it out of the General's possession, and returned it into his possession again. The assignment which the General is now exhibiting purports to have been by Anderson in writing. The one I copied was signed with a cross.

I am told that Gen. Neale says that he will swear, that he heard Gen. Adams tell young Anderson that the assignment made by his father was signed with a cross.

The above are facts, as stated. I leave them without comment. I have given the names of

persons who have knowledge of these facts, in order that any one who chooses may call on them and ascertain how far they will corroborate my statements. I have only made these statements because I am known by many to be one of the individuals against whom the charge of forging the assignment and slipping it into the General's papers, has been made; and because our silence might be construed into a confession of its truth. I shall not subscribe my name; but I hereby authorize the editor of the 'Journal' to give it up to any one that may call for it."

["It having been stated this morning that the subscriber had refused to give the name of the author of the hand-bill above referred to (which statement is not true): to save any farther remarks on this subject, I now state that A. Lincoln, Esq., is the author of the hand-bill in question.

SIMEON FRANCIS.]





## Early Home of Abraham Lincoln

Reproduced from a Rare Engraving.

*Thomas Lincoln Built this Cabin in Elizabethtown, Hardin County, Ky., and Moved into it when his Son, Abraham, was still an Infant. The Lincolns lived there till Abraham was seven years old, when they took up Residence in Indiana.*





\*LINCOLN AND TALBOTT REPLY TO GEN. ADAMS,  
Sept. 9, 1837

"SANGAMON JOURNAL," SPRINGFIELD, ILL., Sept. 9, 1837.

IN THE "Republican" of this morning a publication of Gen. Adams's appears, in which my name is used quite unreservedly. For this I thank the General. I thank him because it gives me an opportunity, without appearing obtrusive, of explaining a part of a former publication of mine, which appears to me to have been misunderstood by many.

In the former publication alluded to, I stated, in substance, that Mr. Talbott got a deed from a son of Gen. Adams's for the purpose of correcting a mistake that had occurred on the record of the said deed in the recorder's office—that he corrected the record, and brought the deed and handed it to me—and that, on opening the deed, another paper, being the assignment of a judgment, *fell out* of it. This statement Gen. Adams and the editor of the "Republican," have seized upon as a most palpable evidence of fabrication and falsehood. They set themselves gravely about proving that the assignment could

not have been in the deed when Talbott got it from young Adams, as he, Talbott, would have seen it when he opened the deed to correct the record. Now, the truth is, Talbott *did* see the assignment when he opened the deed, or at least he told me he did on the same day; and I only omitted to say so, in my former publication, because it was a matter of such palpable and necessary inference. I had stated that Talbott had corrected the record by the deed; and of course he must have opened it; and, just as the General and his friends argue, must have seen the assignment. I omitted to state the fact of Talbott's seeing the assignment, because its existence was so necessarily connected with other facts which I did state, that I thought the greatest dunce could not but understand it. Did I say Talbott had not seen it? Did I say *anything* that was *inconsistent* with his having seen it before? Most certainly I did neither; and if I did not, what becomes of the argument? These logical gentlemen cannot sustain their argument only by assuming that I *did say negatively* everything that I *did not* say affirmatively; and upon the same assumption, we may expect to find the General, if a little harder pressed for argument, saying that I said Talbott came to our office with his head downward, not that I actually

said so, but because I omitted to say he came feet downward.

In his publication to-day, the General produces the affidavit of Reuben Radford, in which it is said that Talbott told Radford that he did not find the assignment in the deed, in the recording of which the error was omitted, but that he found it wrapped in another paper in the recorder's office, upon which statement the General comments, as follows, to-wit:—"If it be true as stated by Talbott to Radford, that he found the assignment wrapped up in another paper at his office, that contradicts the statement of Lincoln that it fell out of the deed."

Is common sense to be abused with such sophistry? Did I say what Talbott found it in? If Talbott *did* find it in another paper at *his* office, is that any reason why he could not have folded it in a deed and brought it to *my* office, can any one be so far duped, as to be made believe that what may have happened at *Talbott's* office at one time, is inconsistent with what happened at *my* office at another time?

Now Talbott's statement of the case as he makes it to me is this, that he got a bunch of deeds from young Adams, and that he knows he found the assignment in the bunch, but he is not certain which particular deed it was in, nor is he certain whether it was folded in the same



deed out of which it was took, or another one, when it was brought to my office. Is this a mysterious story? Is there anything suspicious about it?

“But it is useless to dwell longer on this point. Any man who is not wilfully blind can see at a blush, that there is no discrepancy and Lincoln has shown that they are not only inconsistent with truth, but each other”—I can only say, that I have shown that he has done no such thing; and if the reader is disposed to require any other evidence than the General’s assertion, he will be of my opinion.

Excepting the General’s most flimsy attempt at mystification, in regard to a discrepancy between Talbott and myself, he has not denied a single statement that I made in my hand-bill. Every material statement that I made has been sworn to by men who, in former times, were thought as respectable as General Adams. I stated that an assignment of a judgment, a copy of which I gave, had existed—Benj. Talbott, C. R. Matheny, Wm. Butler, and Judge Logan, swore to its existence, I stated that it was said to be in Gen. Adams’s handwriting—the same men swore it was in his handwriting. I stated that Talbott would swear that he got it out of Gen. Adams’s possession—Talbott came forward and did swear it.



THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT



Bidding adieu to the former publication, I now propose to examine the General's last gigantic production. I now propose to point out some discrepancies in the General's address; and such too, as he shall not be able to escape from. Speaking of the famous assignment, the General says, "This last charge, which was their last resort, their dying effort to render my character infamous among my fellow citizens, was manufactured at a certain lawyer's office in the town, printed at the office of the 'Sangamon Journal,' and found its way into the world some time between two days *just before the last election.*" Now turn to Mr. Key's affidavit in which you will find the following, (viz.) "I certify that some time in May or the early part of June, 1837, I saw at Williams's corner, a paper purporting to be an assignment from Joseph Anderson to James Adams, which assignment, was signed by a mark to Anderson's name," etc. Now mark, if Keys saw the assignment on the last of May or first of June, Gen. Adams tells a falsehood when he says it was *manufactured just before the election*, which was on the 7th of August; and if it was manufactured just before the election, Keys tells a falsehood when he says he saw it on the last of May or first of June. Either Keys or the General is irretrievably in for it; and in the General's very conde-

scending language, I say "let them settle it between them."

Now again, let the reader, bearing in mind that General Adams has unequivocally said, in one part of his address, that the charge in relation to the assignment was *manufactured just before the election*; turn to the affidavit of Peter S. Weber, where the following will be found, (viz.) "I, Peter S. Weber, do certify that from the best of my recollection, on the day or day after Gen. Adams started for the Illinois Rapids, in May last, that I was at the house of Gen. Adams, sitting in the kitchen, situated on the back part of the house, it being in the afternoon, and that Benjamin Talbott came around the house, back into the kitchen, and appeared wild and confused, and that he laid a package of papers on the kitchen table and requested that they should be handed to Lucian. He made no apology for coming to the kitchen, nor for not handing them to Lucian himself, but showed the token of being frightened and confused both in demeanor and speech and for what cause I could not apprehend."

Commenting on Weber's affidavit, Gen. Adams asks, "Why this fright and confusion?" I reply that this is a question for the General himself. Weber says that it was in May, and if so, it is most clear, that Talbott was not fright-

ened on account of the assignment, unless the General lies when he says the assignment charge was manufactured *just before the election*. Is it not a strong evidence, that the General is not traveling with the pole-star of truth in his front, to see him in one part of his address roundly asserting that the assignment was manufactured *just before the election*, and then, forgetting that position, procuring Weber's most foolish affidavit, to prove that Talbott had been engaged in manufacturing it *two months before*?

In another part of his address, Gen. Adams says, "That I hold an assignment of said judgment, dated the 20th of May, 1828, and signed by said Anderson, I have never pretended to deny or conceal, but stated that fact in one of my circulars previous to the election, and also in answer *to a bill in chancery*." Now I pronounce this statement unqualifiedly false, and shall not rely on the word or oath of any man to sustain me in what I say; but will let the whole be decided by reference to the circular and answer in chancery of which the General speaks. In his circular he did speak of an assignment; but he *did not* say it bore date 20th of May, 1828; nor did he say it bore any date. In his answer in chancery, he did say that he had an assignment; but he *did not* say that it bore date the 20th of May, 1828; but so far from it,

he said on oath (for he swore to the answer) that as well as recollected, he obtained it in 1827. If any one doubts, let him examine the circular and answer for himself. They are both accessible.

It will readily be observed that the principal part of Adams's defense, rests upon the argument, that if he had been base enough to forge an assignment, he would not have been *fool enough* to forge one that would not cover the case. This argument he used in his circular before the election. The "Republican" has used it at least once, since then; and Adams uses it again in his publication of to-day. Now I pledge myself to show that he is just such a *fool*, that he and his friends have contended it was impossible for him to be. Recollect—he says he has a genuine assignment; and that he got Joseph Klein's affidavit, stating that he had seen it, and that he believed the signature to have been executed by the same hand, that signed Anderson's name to the answer in Chancery. Luckily Klein took a copy of this *genuine* assignment, which I have been permitted to see; and hence I know *it does not cover the case*. In the first place it is headed "Joseph Anderson vs. Joseph Miller," and heads off "Judgment in Sangamon Circuit Court." Now, mark, there never was a case in Sangamon Circuit Court en-



titled Joseph Anderson vs. Joseph Miller. The case mentioned in my former publication, and the only one between these parties that ever existed in the Circuit Court, was entitled Joseph Miller vs. Joseph Anderson, Miller being the plaintiff. What then becomes of all their sophistry about Adams not being *fool enough* to forge an assignment that would not cover the case? It is certain that the present one does not cover the case; and if he got it honestly, it is still clear that he *was fool enough* to pay for an assignment that does not cover the case.

The General asks for the proof of disinterested witnesses. Who does he consider disinterested? None can be more so than those who have already testified against him. No one of them had the least interest on earth, so far as I can learn, to injure him. True, he says they had conspired against him; but if the testimony of an angel from Heaven were introduced against him, he would make the same charge of conspiracy. And now I put the question to every reflecting man, do you believe that Benjamin Talbott, Chas. R. Matheny, William Butler and Stephen T. Logan, all sustaining high and spotless characters, and justly proud of them, would deliberately perjure themselves, without any motive whatever, except to injure a man's election; and that, too, a man who had

been a candidate, time out of mind, and yet who had never been elected to any office?

Adams's assurance, in demanding disinterested testimony, is surpassing. He brings in the affidavit of his own son, and even of Peter S. Weber, with whom I am not acquainted, but who, I suppose, is some black or mulatto boy, from his being kept in the kitchen, to prove his points; but when such a man as Talbott, a man who, but two years ago, run against Gen. Adams for the office of Recorder and beat him more than four votes to one, is introduced against him, he asks the community, with all the consequence of a lord, to reject his testimony.

I might easily write a volume, pointing out inconsistencies between the statements in Adams's last address with one another, and with other known facts; (but I am aware the reader must already be tired with the length of this article,) his opening statements, that he was first accused of being a tory, and that he refuted that; that then the Sampson's ghost story was got up, and he refuted that; that as a last resort, a dying effort, the assignment charge was got up is all as false as hell, as all this community must know. Sampson's ghost first made its appearance in print, and that too, after Keys swears he saw the assignment, as any one may see by reference to the files of papers; and Gen. Adams himself,

in reply to the Sampson's ghost story, was the *first man* that raised the cry of *toryism* and it was only by way of set off, and never in seriousness that it was banded back to him. His effort is to make the impression that his enemies first made the charge of toryism and he drove them from that, then Sampson's ghost, he drove them from that, then finally the assignment charge was manufactured *just before the election*. Now, the only general reply he ever made to the Sampson's ghost and tory charges, he made *at one and the same time*, and not in succession as he states; and the date of that reply will show, that it was made at least a month *after* the date on which Keys swears he saw the Anderson assignment. But enough. In conclusion I will only say that I have a character to defend as well as Gen. Adams, but I disdain to *whine* about it as he does. It is true I have no children nor *kitchen boys*; and if I had, I should scorn to lug them in to make affidavits for me.

A. LINCOLN.

September 6, 1837.

\*REPLY TO GENERAL ADAMS, Oct. 28, 1837

TO THE PUBLIC

SUCH is the turn which things have lately taken, that when Gen. Adams writes a book, I am expected to write a commentary on it. In the "Republican" of this morning he has presented the world with a new work of six columns in length: in consequence of which I must beg the room of one column in the "Journal." It is obvious that a minute reply cannot be made in one column to everything that can be said in six; and consequently, I hope that expectation will be answered, if I reply to such parts of the General's publication as are worth replying to.

It may not be improper to remind the reader that in his publication of Sept. 6th, General Adams said that the assignment charge was manufactured *just before the election*; and that in reply I proved that statement to be false by Keys, his own witness. Now, without attempting to explain, he furnishes me with another witness (Tinsley) by which the same thing is proved,

to-wit, that the assignment *was not* manufactured *just before the election*; but that it was *some weeks* before. Let it be borne in mind that Adams made this statement—has himself furnished two witnesses to prove its falsehood, and does not attempt to deny or explain it. Before going farther, let a pin be stuck here, labeled “one lie proved and confessed.” On the 6th of September he said he had before stated in the hand-bill that he held an assignment dated May 20th, 1828, which in reply I pronounced to be false, and referred to the hand-bill for the truth of what I said. This week he forgets to make any explanation of this. Let another pin be stuck here, labeled as before. I mention these things, because, if, when I convict him in one falsehood, he is permitted to shift his ground and pass it by in silence, there can be no end to this controversy.

The first thing that attracts my attention in the General's present production, is the information he is pleased to give to “Those who are made to suffer at his (my) *hands*.”

Under present circumstances, this cannot apply to me, for I am not a *widow* nor an *orphan*: nor have I a wife or children who might by possibility become such. Such, however, I have no doubt, have been, and will again be made to suffer at his *hands!! Hands!* Yes, they are

the mischievous agents. The next thing I shall notice is his favorite expression, "not of lawyers, doctors and others," which he is so fond of applying to all who dare expose his rascality. Now, let it be remembered that when he first came to this country he attempted to impose himself upon the community as a *lawyer*, and actually carried the attempt so far, as to induce a man who was under a charge of murder to entrust the defense of his life in his hands, and finally took his money and got him hanged. Is this the man that is to raise a breeze in his favor by abusing lawyers? If he is not himself a lawyer, it is for the lack of sense, and not of inclination. If he is not a lawyer, he *is* a liar for he proclaimed himself a lawyer, and got a man hanged by depending on him.

Passing over such parts of the article as have neither fact nor argument in them, I come to the question asked by Adams whether any person ever saw the assignment in his possession. This is an insult to common sense. Talbott has sworn once and repeated time and again, that he got it *out* of Adams's possession and returned it into the same possession. Still, as though he was addressing fools, he has assurance to ask if any person ever saw it in his possession. Next I quote a sentence, "Now my son Lucian swears that when Talbott called for the deed, that he,

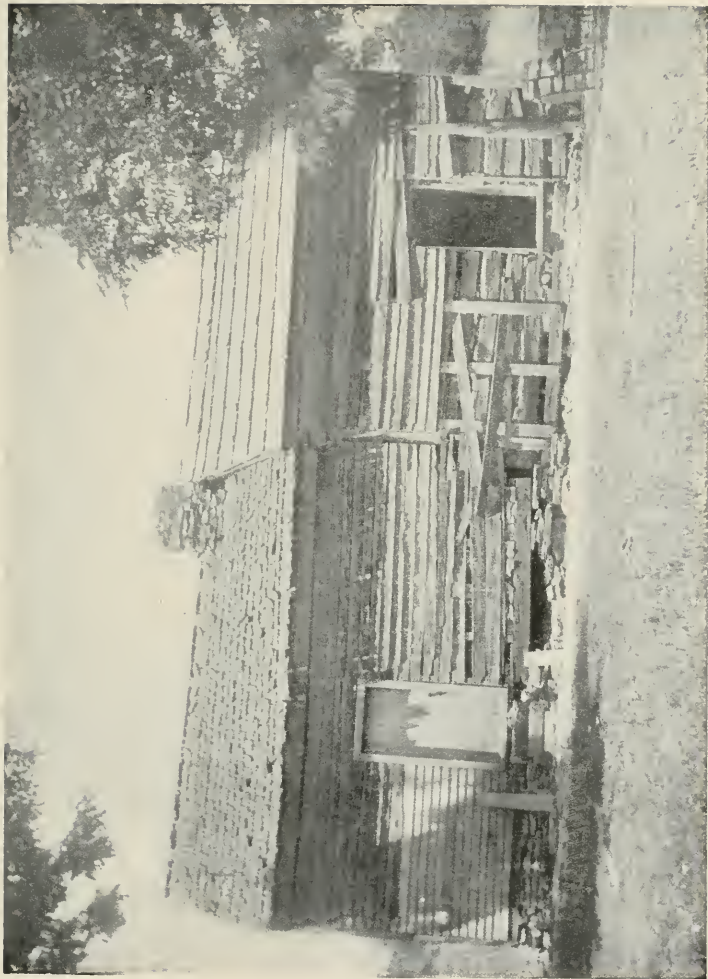
Talbott, opened it and *pointed out the error*." True. His son Lucian did swear as he says; and in doing so, he swore what I will prove by his own affidavit to be a falsehood. Turn to Lucian's affidavit, and you will there see that Talbott called for the deed by which to correct an error on the *record*. Thus it appears that the error in question was on the *record*, and not in the *deed*. How then could Talbott open the deed and point out the *error*? Where a thing *is not*, it cannot be pointed out. The error *was not* in the *deed*, and of course could not be pointed out there. This does not merely prove that the error could not be pointed out, as Lucian swore it was; but it proves, too, that the deed was not opened in his presence with a special view to the error, for if it had been, he could not have failed to see that there was no error in it. It is easy enough to see why Lucian swore this. His object was to prove that the assignment *was not* in the deed, when Talbott got it: but it was discovered he could not swear this safely, without first swearing the deed was *opened*—and if he swore it was *opened*, he must show a *motive* for opening it, and the conclusion with him and his father was, that the pointing out the error, would appear the most plausible.

For the purpose of showing that the assignment was not in the bundle when Talbott got it,



is the story introduced into Lucian's affidavit that the deeds were counted. It is a remarkable fact, and one that should stand as a warning to all liars and fabricators, that in this short affidavit of Lucian's, he only attempted to depart from the truth, so far as I have the means of knowing, in two points, to-wit, in *the opening the deed and pointing out the error*; and the *counting of the deeds*,—and in both of these he caught himself. About the counting, he caught himself thus—after saying the bundle contained *five* deeds and a lease, he proceeds, “and I saw no others papers than the *said deed* and lease.” First he has *six* papers, and then he saw none but *two* for “my son Lucian's” benefit, let a pin be stuck here.

Adams again adduces the argument, that he could not have forged the assignment, for the reason that he could have had no *motive* for it. With those that know the facts there is no absence of motive. Admitting the paper, which he has filed in the suit to be genuine, it is clear that *it* cannot answer the purpose for which he designs it. Hence his motive for making one that he supposed would answer, is obvious.—His making the date too old is also easily enough accounted for. The records were not in his hands, and then there being some considerable talk upon this particular subject, he knew he



HOUSE NEAR BEECHLAND, KENTUCKY, WHERE THOMAS LINCOLN AND NANCY HANKS WERE MARRIED.



could not examine the records to ascertain the precise dates without subjecting himself to suspicion; and hence he concluded to try it by guess, and as it turned out, missed it a little. About Miller's deposition, I have a word to say. In the first place, Miller's answer to the first question shows upon its face, that he had been tampered with, and the answer dictated to him. He was asked if he knew Joel Wright and James Adams; and above three fourths of his answer consists of what he knew about Joseph Anderson, a man about whom nothing had been asked, nor a word said in the question—a fact that can only be accounted for upon the supposition, that Adams had secretly told him what he wished him to swear to.

Another of Miller's answers I will prove both by common sense and the Court of Record is untrue. To one question he answers, "Anderson brought a suit against me before James Adams, then an acting Justice of the Peace in Sangamon County, before whom he obtained a judgment.

Q.—Did you *remove* the same by injunction to the Sangamon Circuit Court? Ans.—I did remove it. Now mark—it is said he *removed* it by *injunction*. The word "*injunction*" in common language imports a command that some person or thing shall not *move* or be *removed*;

in law it has the same meaning. An injunction issuing out of Chancery to a Justice of the Peace, is a command to him to stop all proceedings in a named case until further orders. It is not an order to *remove* but to *stop* or stay something that is already *moving*. Besides this, the records of the Sangamon Circuit Court show, that the judgment of which Miller swore was never removed into said Court by injunction or otherwise.

I have now to take notice of a part of Adams's address which in the order of time should have been noticed before. It is in these words, "I have now shown, in the opinion of two competent judges, that the handwriting of the forged assignment differed from mine, *and by one of them that it could not be mistaken for mine.*" That is false. Tinsley no doubt is the judge referred to; and by reference to his certificate it will be seen that he did not say the handwriting of the assignment could not be mistaken for Adams's—nor did he use any other expression substantially, or anything near substantially the same. But if Tinsley had said the handwriting could not be mistaken for Adams's it would have been equally unfortunate for Adams: for it then would have contradicted Keys, who says, "I looked at the writing and judged it the said Adams's or a good imitation."

Adams speaks with much apparent confidence of his success attending law suits, and the ultimate maintenance of his title to the land in question. Without wishing to disturb the pleasure of his dream, I would say to him that it is not impossible, that he may yet be taught to sing a different song in relation to the matter.

At the end of Miller's deposition, Adams asks, "Will Mr. Lincoln *now* say that he is almost convinced my title to this ten acre tract of land is founded on fraud?" I answer, I will not. I will *now* change the phraseology so as to make it run—I am *quite* convinced, &c. I cannot pass in silence Adams's assertion that he has proved that the forged assignment was not in the deed when it came from his house by *Talbott*, the Recorder. In this, although Talbott has sworn that the assignment was in the bundle of deed when it came from his house, Adams has the unaccountable assurance to say that he has proved the contrary by Talbott. Let him or his friends attempt to show, wherein he proved any such thing by Talbott.

In his publication of the 6th of September he *hinted* to Talbott, that *he might be mistaken*. In his present, speaking of Talbott and me he says "*They may have been imposed upon,*" Can any man of the least penetration fail to see the object of this? After he has stormed and

raged till he hopes and imagines he has got us a little scared he wishes to softly whisper in our ears, "If you'll quit I will." If he could get us to say, that some unknown, undefined being had slipped the assignment into our hands without our knowledge, not a doubt remains but that he would immediately discover, that we were the purest men on earth. This is the ground he evidently wishes us to understand he is willing to compromise upon. But we ask no such charity at his hands. We are neither *mistaken* nor *imposed upon*. We have made the statements we have, because we know them to be true and we choose to live or die by them.

Esquire Carter, who is Adam's friend, personal and political, will recollect, that, on the 5th of this month, he (Adams), with a great affectation of modesty, declared that he would never introduce his own child as a witness. Notwithstanding this affectation of modesty, he has in his present publication introduced his child as witness; and as if to show with how much contempt he could treat his own declaration, he has had this same Esquire Carter to administer the oath to him. And so important a witness does he consider him, and so entirely does the whole of his entire present production depend upon the testimony of his child, that in it he has mentioned



"my son," "my son Lucian," "Lucian, my son," and the like expressions no less than fifteen different times. Let it be remembered here, that I have shown the affidavit of "my darling son Lucian" to be false by the evidence apparent on its own face; and I now ask if that affidavit be taken away what foundation will the fabric have left to stand upon?

General Adams's publications and out-door manœuvring taken in connection with the editorial articles of the "Republican," are not more foolish and contradictory than they are ludicrous and amusing. One week the "Republican" notifies the public that Gen. Adams is preparing an *instrument* that will tear, rend, split, rive, blow up, confound, overwhelm, annihilate, extinguish, exterminate, burst asunder, and grind to powder all its slanderers, and particularly Talbott and Lincoln—all of which is to be done *in due time*. Then for two or three weeks all is calm—not a word said. Again the "Republican" comes forth with a mere passing remark that "Public opinion has decided in favor of Gen. Adams," and intimates that he will give himself no more trouble about the matter. In the meantime Adams himself is prowling about, and as Burns says of the Devil, "For prey, a' holes and corners tryin'," and in one instance, goes so far as to take an old acquaintance of

mine several steps from a crowd and apparently weighed down with the importance of his business, gravely and solemnly asks him if "*he ever heard Lincoln say he was a deist.*" Anon the "Republican" comes again, "We invite the attention of the public to General Adams's communication," &c., "The victory is a great one," "The triumph is overwhelming." (I really believe the editor of the Illinois "Republican" is fool enough to think General Adams is an honest man.) Then Gen. Adams leads off—"*Authors most egregiously mistaken,*" &c.,—"*most woefully shall their presumption be punished,*" &c. (Lord, have mercy on us.) "*The hour is yet to come, yea nigh at hand—*(how long first do you reckon?)—*when the 'Journal' and its junto shall say, I have appeared too early.*"—"Then infamy shall be laid bare to the public gaze." Suddenly the General appears to relent at the severity with which he is treating us and he exclaims, "*The condemnation of my enemies is the inevitable result of my own defense.*" For your health's sake dear General, do not permit your tenderness of heart to afflict you so much on our account. For some reason (perhaps because we are killed so quickly) we shall never be sensible of our suffering.

Farewell, General. I will see you again at Court, if not before—when and where we will

settle the question whether you or the widow shall have the land. A. LINCOLN.

October 18, 1837.

# LETTER TO MRS. O. H. BROWNING<sup>1</sup>

SPRINGFIELD, April 1, 1838.

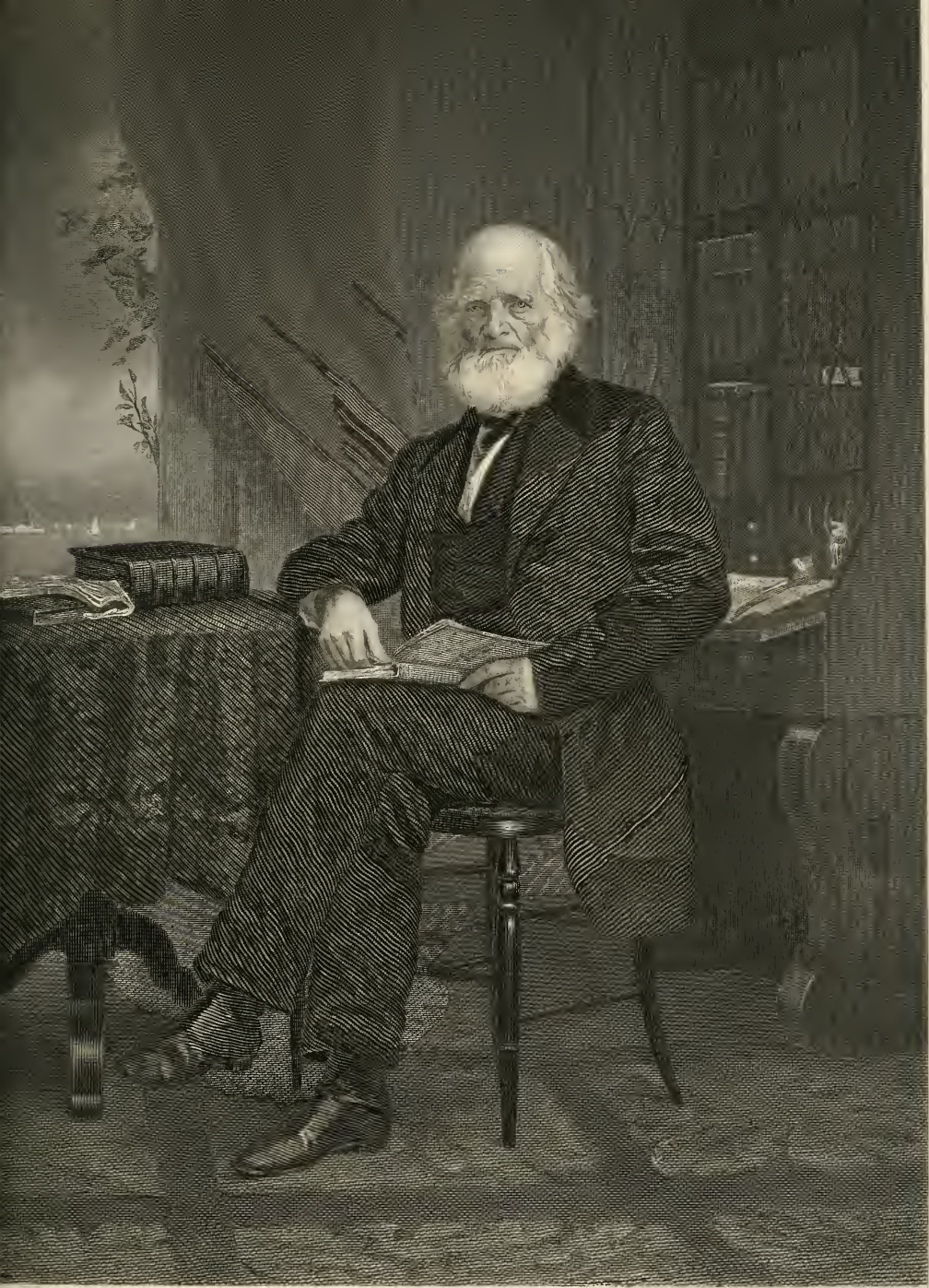
*Dear Madam:* Without apologizing for being egotistical, I shall make the history of so much of my life as has elapsed since I saw you the subject of this letter. And, by the way, I now discover that in order to give a full and intelligible account of the things I have done and suffered since I saw you, I shall necessarily have to relate some that happened before.

It was, then, in the autumn of 1836 that a married lady of my acquaintance, and who was a great friend of mine, being about to pay a visit to her father and other relatives residing in Kentucky, proposed to me that on her return she would bring a sister of hers with her on condition that I would engage to become her brother-in-law with all convenient despatch. I, of course, accepted the proposal, for you know I could not have done otherwise had I really been

<sup>1</sup> This letter to Mrs. Browning recounts a curious love affair between Mary Owen and Lincoln. Miss Owen refused him because he was "deficient in those little links which go to make up the chains of a woman's happiness," but it was probably because of the lack of ardor in his suit. Many years after when Mrs. Browning notified Lincoln that his letter was about to be published he cautioned her there was in it "too much truth for print."

averse to it; but privately between you and me, I was most confoundedly well pleased with the project. I had seen the said sister some three years before, thought her intelligent and agreeable, and saw no good objection to plodding life through hand in hand with her. Time passed on, the lady took her journey and in due time returned, sister in company, sure enough. This astonished me a little, for it appeared to me that her coming so readily showed that she was a trifle too willing, but on reflection it occurred to me that she might have been prevailed on by her married sister to come, without anything concerning me having been mentioned to her, and so I concluded that if no other objection presented itself, I would consent to waive this. All this occurred to me on hearing of her arrival in the neighborhood—for, be it remembered, I had not yet seen her, except about three years previous, as above mentioned. In a few days we had an interview, and, although I had seen her before, she did not look as my imagination had pictured her. I knew she was over-size, but now she appeared a fair match for Falstaff. I knew she was called an “old maid,” and I felt no doubt of the truth of at least half of the appellation, but now, when I beheld her, I could not for my life avoid thinking of my mother; and this, not from withered features,—for her skin





William Cullen Bryant



was too full of fat to permit of its contracting into wrinkles,—but from her want of teeth, weather-beaten appearance in general, and from a kind of notion that ran in my head that nothing could have commenced at the size of infancy and reached her present bulk in less than thirty-five or forty years; and, in short, I was not at all pleased with her. But what could I do? I had told her sister that I would take her for better or for worse, and I made a point of honor and conscience in all things to stick to my word, especially if others had been induced to act on it, which in this case I had no doubt they had, for I was now fairly convinced that no other man on earth would have her, and hence the conclusion that they were bent on holding me to my bargain. “Well,” thought I, “I have said it, and, be the consequences what they may, it shall not be my fault if I fail to do it.” At once I determined to consider her my wife, and this done, all my powers of discovery were put to work in search of perfections in her which might be fairly set off against her defects. I tried to imagine her handsome, which, but for her unfortunate corpulency, was actually true. Exclusive of this, no woman that I have ever seen has a finer face. I also tried to convince myself that the mind was much more to be valued than the person, and in this she was not in-



ferior, as I could discover, to any with whom I had been acquainted.

Shortly after this, without attempting to come to any positive understanding with her, I set out for Vandalia, when and where you first saw me. During my stay there I had letters from her which did not change my opinion of either her intellect or intention, but, on the contrary, confirmed it in both.

All this while, although I was fixed "firm as the surge-repelling rock" in my resolution, I found I was continually repenting the rashness which had led me to make it. Through life I have been in no bondage, either real or imaginary, from the thralldom of which I so much desired to be free. After my return home I saw nothing to change my opinion of her in any particular. She was the same, and so was I. I now spent my time in planning how I might get along in life after my contemplated change in circumstances should have taken place, and how I might procrastinate the evil day for a time, which I really dreaded as much, perhaps more, than an Irishman does the halter.

After all my sufferings upon this deeply interesting subject, here I am, wholly, unexpectedly, completely out of the "scrape," and I now want to know if you can guess how I got out of it—out, clear, in every sense of the term—no viola-

tion of word, honor, or conscience. I don't believe you can guess, and so I might as well tell you at once. As the lawyer says, it was done in the manner following, to-wit: After I had delayed the matter as long as I thought I could in honor do (which, by the way, had brought me round into the last fall), I concluded I might as well bring it to a consummation without further delay, and so I mustered my resolution and made the proposal to her direct; but, shocking to relate, she answered, No. At first I supposed she did it through an affectation of modesty, which I thought but ill became her under the peculiar circumstances of her case, but on my renewal of the charge I found she repelled it with greater firmness than before. I tried it again and again, but with the same success, or rather with the same want of success.

I finally was forced to give it up, at which I very unexpectedly found myself mortified almost beyond endurance. I was mortified, it seemed to me, in a hundred different ways. My vanity was deeply wounded by the reflection that I had so long been too stupid to discover her intentions, and at the same time never doubting that I understood them perfectly; and also that she, whom I had taught myself to believe nobody else would have, had actually rejected me with all my fancied greatness. And, to cap the

whole, I then for the first time began to suspect that I was really a little in love with her. But let it all go! I'll try and outlive it. Others have been made fools of by the girls, but this can never with truth be said of me. I most emphatically, in this instance, made a fool of myself. I have now come to the conclusion never again to think of marrying, and for this reason—I can never be satisfied with any one who would be blockhead enough to have me.

When you receive this, write me a long yarn about something to amuse me. Give my respects to Mr. Browning.

Your sincere friend,

MRS. O. H. BROWNING.

A. LINCOLN.

## REMARKS IN THE ILLINOIS LEGISLATURE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, January 17, 1839.

Mr. Lincoln, from Committee on Finance, to which the subject was referred, made a report on the subject of purchasing of the United States all the unsold lands lying within the limits of the State of Illinois, accompanied by resolutions that this State propose to purchase all unsold lands at twenty-five cents per acre, and pledging the faith of the State to carry the proposal into effect if the government accept the same within two years.

. . . . .

Mr. Lincoln thought the resolutions ought to be seriously considered. In reply to the gentleman from Adams, he said that it was not to enrich the State. The price of the lands may be raised, it was thought by some; by others, that it would be reduced. The conclusion in his mind was that the representatives in this legislature from the country in which the lands lie would be opposed to raising the price, because it would operate against the settlement of the lands. He referred to the lands in the military tract. They had fallen into the hands of large speculators in consequence of the low price. He was opposed to a low price of land. He thought it was adverse to the interests of the poor settler, because speculators buy them up. He was opposed to a reduction of the price of public lands.

Mr. Lincoln referred to some official documents emanating from Indiana, and compared the progressive population of the two States. Illinois had gained upon that State under the public land system as it is. His conclusion was that ten years from this time Illinois would have no more public land unsold than Indiana now has. He referred also to Ohio. That State had sold nearly all her public lands. She was but twenty years ahead of us, and as our lands were equally salable—more so, as he maintained—we

should have no more twenty years from now than she has at present.

Mr. Lincoln referred to the canal lands, and supposed that the policy of the State would be different in regard to them, if the representatives from that section of country could themselves choose the policy; but the representatives from other parts of the State had a veto upon it, and regulated the policy. He thought that if the State had all the lands, the policy of the legislature would be more liberal to all sections.

He referred to the policy of the General Government. He thought that if the national debt had not been paid, the expenses of the government would not have doubled, as they had done since that debt was paid.

### LETTER TO A. P. FIELD

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, May 11, 1839.

A. P. FIELD, ESQ.

*Dear Sir:* At the late session an act passed both Houses of legislature for the benefit of the clerks of the Circuit Courts of Sangamon, Hamilton, and Fayette counties. I can see nothing of this act in the printed laws, one copy of which has reached us. I know it passed both Houses, but I am a little suspicious it has not been duly acted on by the Council of Revision. Will you

please learn and write us what condition it is in, and also send us a copy of the act? Mr. Butler will pay the charge on sight. Your friend,

A. LINCOLN.

\* LETTER TO R. HERNDON

SPRINGFIELD, June 11th, 1839.

*Dear Row:*. Mr. Redman informs me that you wish me to write you the particulars of a conversation between Dr. Felix and myself relative to you. The Doctor overtook me between Rushville and Beardstown. He, after learning that I had lived in Springfield, asked if I was acquainted with you. I told him I was. He said you had lately been elected constable in Adams, but that you never would be again. I asked him why? He said the people there, had found out that you had been Sheriff or Deputy Sheriff in Sangamon County, and that you came off and left your securities to suffer. He then asked me if I did not know such to be the fact. I told him I did not think you had ever been Sheriff or Deputy Sheriff in Sangamon; but that I thought you had been constable. I further told him that if you had left your securities to suffer in that or any other case, I had never heard of it, and that if it had been so, I thought I would have heard of it.

If the Doctor is telling that I told him anything against you whatever, I authorize you to contradict it flatly. We have no news here.

Your friend, as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

\*LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF THE "CHICAGO  
AMERICAN."

SPRINGFIELD, June 24th, 1839.

*Mr. Editor:* From present indications we have every reason to believe that Mr. Douglass will contest the right of Mr. Stuart to a Seat in Congress. We deem it a matter of great importance to the Whig party of this District that they should be prepared to meet such contest. The importance of the decision of that contest is increased by the doubt which at present exists as to which party will have the ascendancy in the next Congress. In this state of uncertainty one vote may become of the utmost importance to the sustaining of those great principles for which the Whig party are now contending. To prepare ourselves for the contest and to solicit your aid in so doing by engaging your assistance in the collection of proofs to the following facts, are the objects of this communication.

1st. Whether there are any mistakes for or against Mr. Stuart in the addition of columns



or otherwise, apparent on the face of the Poll Books of your County?

2nd. Whether any person voted for Mr. Douglass in your County who were *minors*, or who had not been *Residents* of the State *Six months* preceding the Election?

3rd. Whether any *unnaturalized foreigners* voted for Mr. Douglass in your County?

After you shall have examined into the preceding questions, we will thank you to write us the result without delay together with the *names* of the *illegal* voters referred to in the two last questions; the names of the individuals by whom the fact of their illegality can be proved and the name and the residence of a Justice of the Peace before whom depositions can be taken and a proper place to take them. When informed by you of the fact will immediately take steps to procure the proofs. We would suggest the propriety of your consulting the political Friends you may think proper in your County and solicit their assistance in procuring the above facts; or the appointment of precinct committees as you may think the most advisable.

Respectfully yours, &c.,

JOSHUA F. SPEED,

E. D. BAKER,

MILTON HAY,

JAMES H. MATHENY,

A. LINCOLN.

N. B.—Would it not be as well to keep the knowledge of this investigation, as well as any discoveries you may make, confined to as few as possible?

P. S.—Let letters on this subject, be addressed to "Stuart & Lincoln," as business letters.

### LETTER TO JOHN T. STUART

SPRINGFIELD, November 14, 1839.

*Dear Stuart:* I have been to the secretary's office within the last hour, and find things precisely as you left them. No new arrivals of returns on either side. Douglas has not been here since you left. A report is in circulation here now that he has abandoned the idea of going to Washington, though the report does not come in a very authentic form, so far as I can learn. Though, by the way, speaking of authenticity, you know that if we had heard Douglas say that he had abandoned the contest, it would not be very authentic. There is no news here. Noah, I still think, will be elected very easily. I am afraid of our race for representative. Dr. Knapp has become a candidate, and I fear the few votes he will get will be taken from us. Also some one has been tampering with old Esquire Wicoff, and induced him to send in his name to be announced as a candidate. Francis refused to announce him without seeing him,

and now I suppose there is to be a fuss about it. I have been so busy that I have not seen Mrs. Stuart since you left, though I understand she wrote you by to-day's mail, which will inform you more about her than I could. The very moment a Speaker is elected, write me who he is. Your friend as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

SPEECH AT A POLITICAL DISCUSSION IN THE  
HALL OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
AT SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, December  
[20?], 1839.<sup>1</sup>

*(From a pamphlet copy in possession of Hon.  
T. J. Henderson, Illinois.)*

FELLOW-CITIZENS: It is peculiarly embarrassing to me to attempt a continuance of the discussion, on this evening, which has been conducted in this hall on several preceding ones. It is so because on each of those evenings there was a much fuller attendance than now, without any reason for its being so, except the greater interest the community feel in the speakers who addressed them then than they do in him who is to do so now.

<sup>1</sup> The year 1839 found the seat of government in Illinois shifted from Vandalia to Springfield. A group of extraordinary men gathered in the new capital — Lincoln, Douglas, Baker, Calhoun, Stuart, Shields, Logan, Trumbull and others. Local issues were engulfed in national questions. Springfield was the centre of a political storm. During December, 1839, a series of public debates took place in which a number of leading orators participated. Lincoln was the last to speak, and his speech was regarded as the best delivered in the series. Upon demand it was printed for general distribution.

I am, indeed, apprehensive that the few who have attended have done so more to spare me mortification than in the hope of being interested in anything I may be able to say. This circumstance casts a damp upon my spirits, which I am sure I shall be unable to overcome during the evening. But enough of preface.

The subject heretofore and now to be discussed is the subtreasury scheme of the present administration, as a means of collecting, safe-keeping, transferring, and disbursing the revenues of the nation, as contrasted with a national bank for the same purposes. Mr. Douglas has said that we (the Whigs) have not dared to meet them (the Locos) in argument on this question. I protest against this assertion. I assert that we have again and again, during this discussion, urged facts and arguments against the subtreasury which they have neither dared to deny nor attempted to answer. But lest some may be led to believe that we really wish to avoid the question, I now propose, in my humble way, to urge those arguments again; at the same time begging the audience to mark well the positions I shall take and the proof I shall offer to sustain them, and that they will not again permit Mr. Douglas or his friends to escape the force of them by a round and groundless assertion that we "dare not meet them in argument."

Of the subtreasury, then, as contrasted with a national bank for the before enumerated purposes, I lay down the following propositions, to-wit: (1) It will injuriously affect the community by its operation on the circulating medium. (2) It will be a more expensive fiscal agent. (3) It will be a less secure depository of the public money. To show the truth of the first proposition, let us take a short review of our condition under the operation of a national bank. It was the depository of the public revenues. Between the collection of those revenues and the disbursement of them by the government, the bank was permitted to and did actually loan them out to individuals, and hence the large amount of money annually collected for revenue purposes, which by any other plan would have been idle a great portion of the time, was kept almost constantly in circulation. Any person who will reflect that money is only valuable while in circulation, will readily perceive that any device which will keep the government revenues in constant circulation, instead of being locked up in idleness, is no inconsiderable advantage. By the subtreasury the revenue is to be collected and kept in iron boxes until the government wants it for disbursement; thus robbing the people of the use of it, while the government does not itself need it, and while the money is

performing no nobler office than that of rusting in iron boxes. The natural effect of this change of policy, every one will see, is to reduce the quantity of money in circulation. But, again, by the subtreasury scheme the revenue is to be collected in specie. I anticipate that this will be disputed. I expect to hear it said that it is not the policy of the administration to collect the revenue in specie. If it shall, I reply that Mr. Van Buren, in his message recommending the subtreasury, expended nearly a column of that document in an attempt to persuade Congress to provide for the collection of the revenue in specie exclusively; and he concludes with these words: "It may be safely assumed that no motive of convenience to the citizen requires the reception of bank paper." In addition to this, Mr. Silas Wright, senator from New York, and the political, personal, and confidential friend of Mr. Van Buren, drafted and introduced into the Senate the first subtreasury bill, and that bill provided for ultimately collecting the revenue in specie. It is true, I know, that that clause was stricken from the bill, but it was done by the votes of the Whigs, aided by a portion only of the Van Buren senators. No subtreasury bill has yet become a law, though two or three have been considered by Congress, some with and some without the specie clause; so that I admit



there is room for quibbling upon the question of whether the administration favor the exclusive specie doctrine or not; but I take it that the fact that the President at first urged the specie doctrine, and that under his recommendation the first bill introduced embraced it, warrants us in charging it as the policy of the party until their head as publicly recants it as he at first espoused it. I repeat, then, that by the subtreasury the revenue is to be collected in specie. Now mark what the effect of this must be. By all estimates ever made there are but between sixty and eighty millions of specie in the United States. The expenditures of the Government for the year 1838—the last for which we have had the report—were forty millions. Thus it is seen that if the whole revenue be collected in specie, it will take more than half of all the specie in the nation to do it. By this means more than half of all the specie belonging to the fifteen millions of souls who compose the whole population of the country is thrown into the hands of the public-office holders, and other public creditors, composing in number perhaps not more than one quarter of a million, leaving the other fourteen millions and three quarters to get along as they best can, with less than one half of the specie of the country, and whatever rags and shimplasters they may be able to put,

and keep, in circulation. By this means, every office-holder and other public creditor may, and most likely will, set up shaver; and a most glorious harvest will the specie-men have of it,—each specie-man, upon a fair division, having to his share the fleecing of about fifty-nine ragmen.<sup>1</sup> In all candor let me ask, was such a system for benefiting the few at the expense of the many ever before devised? And was the sacred

<sup>1</sup> On January 4, 1839, the Senate of the United States passed the following resolution, to-wit:

“*Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Treasury be directed to communicate to the Senate any information he may recently have received in respect to the mode of collecting, keeping, and disbursing public moneys in foreign countries.”

Under this resolution, the Secretary communicated to the Senate a letter, the following extract from which clearly shows that the collection of the revenue in specie will establish a sound currency for the office-holders, and a depreciated one for the people; and that the office-holders and other public creditors will turn shavers upon all the rest of the community. Here is the extract from the letter, being all of it that relates to the question:

♦ “HAGUE, October 12, 1838.

“The financial system of Hamburg is, as far as is known, very simple, as may be supposed from so small a territory. The whole amount of Hamburg coined money is about four and a half millions of marks current, or one million two hundred and eighty-two thousand five hundred dollars; and, except under very extraordinary circumstances, not more than one half that amount is in circulation, and all duties, taxes, and excise must be paid in Hamburg currency. The consequence is that it invariably commands a premium of one to three per centum. Every year one senator and ten citizens are appointed to transact the whole of the financial concern, both as to receipt and disbursement of the funds, which is always in cash, and is every day deposited in the bank,

name of Democracy ever before made to indorse such an enormity against the rights of the people?

I have already said that the subtreasury will reduce the quantity of money in circulation. This position is strengthened by the recollection that the revenue is to be collected in specie, so that the mere amount of revenue is not all that is withdrawn, but the amount of paper circulation that the forty millions would serve as a basis to is withdrawn, which would be in a sound state at least one hundred millions. When one hundred millions, or more, of the circulation we now have shall be withdrawn, who can contemplate

to the credit of the chancery; and, on being paid out, the citizen to whose department the payment belongs must appear personally with the check or order stating the amount and to whom to be paid. The person receiving very seldom keeps the money, preferring to dispose of it to a money-changer at a premium, and taking other coin at a discount, of which there is a great variety and a large amount constantly in circulation, and on which in his daily payment he loses nothing; and those who have payments to make to the government apply to the money-changers again for Hamburg currency, which keeps it in constant motion, and I believe it frequently occurs that the bags, which are sealed and labeled with the amount, are returned again to the bank without being opened.

“With great respect, your obedient servant,

JOHN CUTHBERT.

“To the Hon. LEVI WOODBURY, Secretary of the Treasury,

“Washington, D. C.”

This letter is found in Senate document, p. 113 of the session of 1838-9.

without terror the distress, ruin, bankruptcy, and beggary that must follow. The man who has purchased any article—say a horse—on credit, at one hundred dollars, when there are two hundred millions circulating in the country, if the quantity be reduced to one hundred millions by the arrival of pay-day, will find the horse but sufficient to pay half the debt; and the other half must either be paid out of his other means, and thereby become a clear loss to him, or go unpaid, and thereby become a clear loss to his creditor. What I have here said of a single case of the purchase of a horse will hold good in every case of a debt existing at the time a reduction in the quantity of money occurs, by whomsoever, and for whatsoever, it may have been contracted. It may be said that what the debtor loses the creditor gains by this operation; but on examination this will be found true only to a very limited extent. It is more generally true that all lose by it—the creditor by losing more of his debts than he gains by the increased value of those he collects; the debtor by either parting with more of his property to pay his debts than he received in contracting them, or by entirely breaking up his business, and thereby being thrown upon the world in idleness.

The general distress thus created will, to be sure, be temporary, because whatever change

may occur in the quantity of money in any community, time will adjust the derangement produced ; but while that adjustment is progressing, all suffer more or less, and very many lose everything that renders life desirable. Why, then, shall we suffer a severe difficulty, even though it be but temporary, unless we receive some equivalent for it?

What I have been saying as to the effect produced by a reduction of the quantity of money relates to the whole country. I now propose to show that it would produce a peculiar and permanent hardship upon the citizens of those States and Territories in which the public lands lie. The land-offices in those States and Territories, as all know, form the great gulf by which all, or nearly all, the money in them is swallowed up. When the quantity of money shall be reduced, and consequently everything under individual control brought down in proportion, the price of those lands, being fixed by law, will remain as now. Of necessity it will follow that the produce or labor that now raises money sufficient to purchase eighty acres will then raise but sufficient to purchase forty, or perhaps not that much ; and this difficulty and hardship will last as long, in some degree, as any portion of these lands shall remain undisposed of. Knowing, as I well do, the difficulty that poor people



VIEW OF ROCK SPRING FARM, WHERE PRESIDENT LINCOLN WAS BORN





now encounter in procuring homes, I hesitate not to say that when the price of the public lands shall be doubled or trebled, or, which is the same thing, produce and labor cut down to one half or one third of their present prices, it will be little less than impossible for them to procure those homes at all.

In answer to what I have said as to the effect the subtreasury would have upon the currency, it is often urged that the money collected for revenue purposes will not lie idle in the vaults of the treasury; and, farther, that a national bank produces greater derangement in the currency, by a system of contractions and expansions, than the subtreasury would produce in any way. In reply, I need only show that experience proves the contrary of both these propositions. It is an undisputed fact that the late Bank of the United States paid the government \$75,000 annually for the privilege of using the public money between the times of its collection and disbursement. Can any man suppose that the bank would have paid this sum annually for twenty years, and then offered to renew its obligations to do so, if in reality there was no time intervening between the collection and disbursement of the revenue, and consequently no privilege of using the money extended to it? Again, as to the contractions and expansions of a national bank, I need

only point to the period intervening between the time that the late bank got into successful operation and that at which the government commenced war upon it, to show that during that period no such contractions or expansions took place. If, before or after that period, derangement occurred in the currency, it proves nothing. The bank could not be expected to regulate the currency, either before it got into successful operation, or after it was crippled and thrown into death convulsions, by the removal of the deposits from it, and other hostile measures of the government against it. We do not pretend that a national bank can establish and maintain a sound and uniform state of currency in the country, in spite of the National Government; but we do say that it has established and maintained such a currency, and can do so again, by the aid of that government; and we further say that no duty is more imperative on that government than the duty it owes the people of furnishing them a sound and uniform currency.

I now leave the proposition as to the effect of the subtreasury upon the currency of the country, and pass to that relative to the additional expense which must be incurred by it over that incurred by a national bank as a fiscal agent of the government. By the late national bank we had the public revenue received, safely kept,

transferred, and disbursed, not only without expense, but we actually received of the bank \$75,000 annually for its privileges while rendering us those services. By the subtreasury, according to the estimate of the Secretary of the Treasury, who is the warm advocate of the system (and which estimate is the lowest made by any one), the same services are to cost \$60,000. Mr. Rives, who, to say the least, is equally talented and honest, estimates that these services, under the subtreasury system, cannot cost less than \$600,000. For the sake of liberality, let us suppose that the estimates of the secretary and Mr. Rives are the two extremes, and that their mean is about the true estimate, and we shall then find that when to that sum is added the \$75,000 which the bank paid us, the difference between the two systems, in favor of the bank and against the subtreasury, is \$405,000 a year. This sum, though small when compared to the many millions annually expended by the General Government, is, when viewed by itself, very large; and much too large, when viewed in any light, to be thrown away once a year for nothing. It is sufficient to pay the pensions of more than four thousand Revolutionary soldiers, or to purchase a forty-acre tract of government land for each one of more than eight thousand poor families.

To the argument against the subtreasury, on

the score of additional expense, its friends, so far as I know, attempt no answer. They choose, so far as I can learn, to treat the throwing away of \$405,000 once a year as a matter entirely too small to merit their Democratic notice.

I now come to the proposition that it would be less secure than a national bank as a depository of the public money. The experience of the past, I think, proves the truth of this. And here, inasmuch as I rely chiefly upon experience to establish it, let me ask how is it that we know anything—that any event will occur, that any combination of circumstances will produce a certain result—except by the analogies of past experience? What has once happened will invariably happen again when the same circumstances which combined to produce it shall again combine in the same way. We all feel that we know that a blast of wind would extinguish the flame of the candle that stands by me. How do we know it? We have never seen this flame thus extinguished. We know it because we have seen through all our lives that a blast of wind extinguishes the flame of a candle whenever it is thrown fully upon it. Again, we all feel to know that we have to die. How? We have never died yet. We know it because we know, or at least think we know, that of all the beings, just like ourselves, who have been coming into

the world for six thousand years, not one is now living who was here two hundred years ago. I repeat, then, that we know nothing of what will happen in future, but by the analogy of experience, and that the fair analogy of past experience fully proves that the subtreasury would be a less safe depository of the public money than a national bank. Examine it. By the subtreasury scheme the public money is to be kept, between the times of its collection and disbursement, by treasurers of the mint, custom-house officers, land officers, and some new officers to be appointed in the same way that those first enumerated are. Has a year passed, since the organization of the government, that numerous defalcations have not occurred among this class of officers? Look at Swartwout with his \$1,200,000, Price with his \$75,000, Harris with his \$109,000, Hawkins with his \$100,000, Linn with his \$55,000, together with some twenty-five hundred lesser lights. Place the public money again in these same hands, and will it not again go the same way? Most assuredly it will. But turn to the history of the national banks of this country, and we shall there see that those banks performed the fiscal operations of the government through a period of forty years, received, safely kept, transferred, disbursed an aggregate of nearly five hundred millions of dollars; and that,

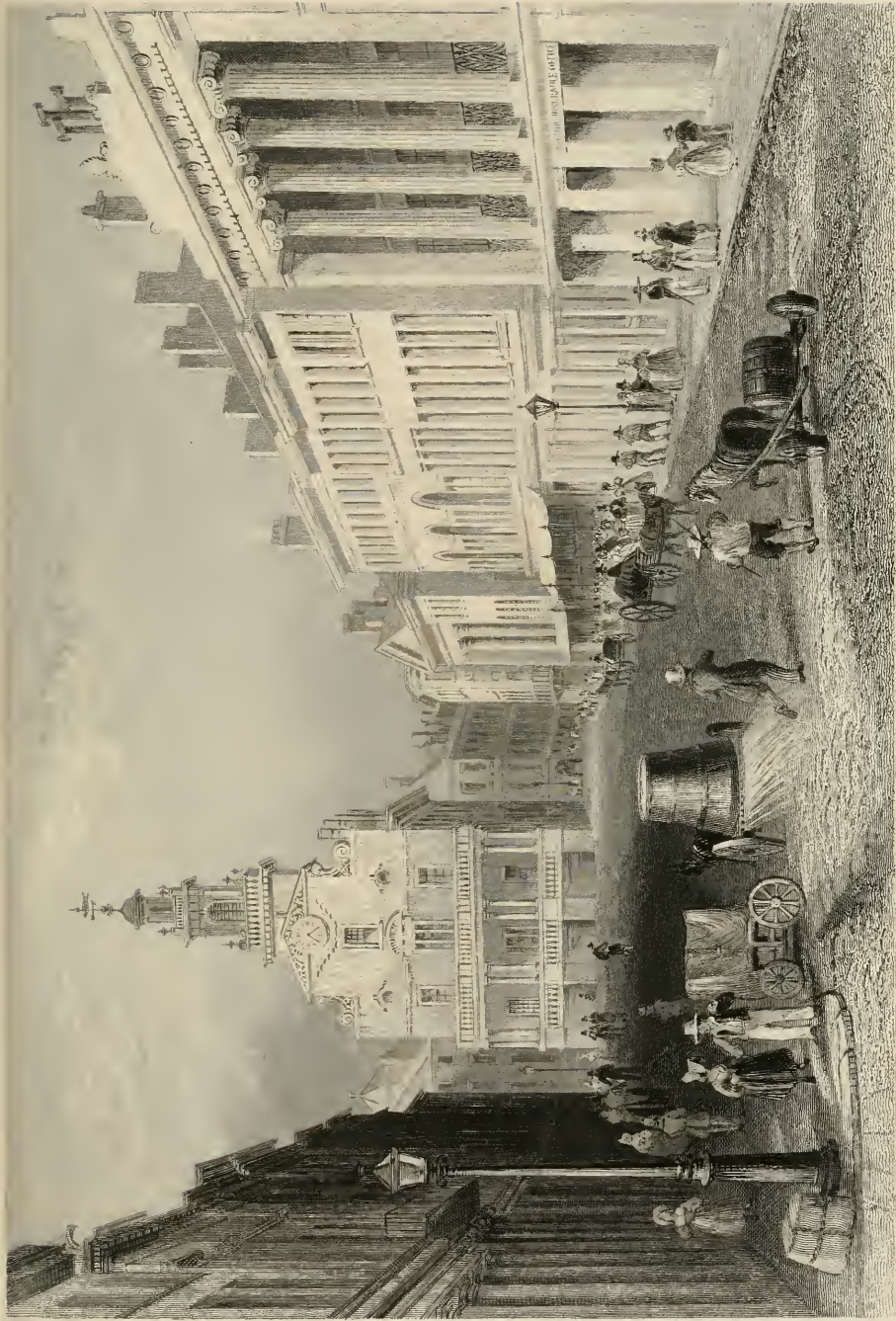
in all this time, and with all that money, not one dollar, nor one cent, did the government lose by them. Place the public money again in a similar depository, and will it not again be safe. But, conclusive as the experience of fifty years is that individuals are unsafe depositories of the public money, and of forty years that national banks are safe depositories, we are not left to rely solely upon that experience for the truth of those propositions. If experience were silent upon the subject, conclusive reasons could be shown for the truth of them.

It is often urged that to say the public money will be more secure in a national bank than in the hands of individuals, as proposed in the sub-treasury, is to say that bank directors and bank officers are more honest than sworn officers of the government. Not so. We insist on no such thing. We say that public officers, selected with reference to their capacity and honesty (which, by the way, we deny is the practice in these days), stand an equal chance, precisely, of being capable and honest with bank officers selected by the same rule. We further say that with however much care selections may be made, there will be some unfaithful and dishonest in both classes. The experience of the whole world, in all bygone times, proves this true. The Saviour of the world chose twelve disciples,

and even one of that small number, selected by superhuman wisdom, turned out a traitor and a devil. And it may not be improper here to add that Judas carried the bag—was the subtreasurer of the Saviour and his disciples. We, then, do not say—nor need we say to maintain our proposition—that bank officers are more honest than government officers selected by the same rule. What we do say is that the interest of the subtreasurer is against his duty, while the interest of the bank is on the side of its duty. Take instances. A subtreasurer has in his hands one hundred thousand dollars of public money; his duty says, “You ought to pay this money over,” but his interest says, “You ought to run away with this sum, and be a nabob the balance of your life.” And who that knows anything of human nature doubts that in many instances interest will prevail over duty, and that the subtreasurer will prefer opulent knavery in a foreign land to honest poverty at home? But how different is it with a bank. Besides the government money deposited with it, it is doing business upon a large capital of its own. If it proves faithful to the government, it continues its business; if unfaithful, it forfeits its charter, breaks up its business, and thereby loses more than all it can make by seizing upon the government funds in its possession. Its interest, there-



fore, is on the side of its duty—is to be faithful to the government, and consequently even the dishonest amongst its managers have no temptation to be faithless to it. Even if robberies happen in the bank, the losses are borne by the bank, and the government loses nothing. It is for this reason, then, that we say a bank is the more secure. It is because of that admirable feature in the bank system which places the interest and the duty of the depository both on one side; whereas that feature can never enter into the subtreasury system. By the latter the interest of the individuals keeping the public money will wage an eternal war with their duty, and in very many instances must be victorious. In answer to the argument drawn from the fact that individual depositories of public money have always proved unsafe, it is urged that, even if we had a national bank, the money has to pass through the same individual hands that it will under the subtreasury. This is only partially true in fact, and wholly fallacious in argument. It is only partially true in fact, because by the subtreasury bill four receivers-general are to be appointed by the President and Senate. These are new officers, and consequently it cannot be true that the money, or any portion of it, has heretofore passed through their hands. These four new officers are to be located at New York, Boston,



STATE STREET, BOSTON

W. H. Bartlett.



Charleston, and St. Louis, and consequently are to be depositories of all the money collected at or near those points; so that more than three fourths of the public money will fall into the keeping of these four new officers, who did not exist as officers under the national-bank system. It is only partially true, then, that the money passes through the same hands, under a national bank, as it would do under the subtreasury. It is true that under either system individuals must be employed as collectors of the customs, receivers at the land-offices, etc., but the difference is that under the bank system the receivers of all sorts receive the money and pay it over to the bank once a week when the collections are large, and once a month when they are small; whereas by the subtreasury system individuals are not only to collect the money, but they are to keep it also, or pay it over to other individuals equally unsafe as themselves, to be by them kept until it is wanted for disbursement. It is during the time that it is thus lying idle in their hands that opportunity is afforded and temptation held out to them to embezzle and escape with it. By the bank system each collector or receiver is to deposit in bank all the money in his hands at the end of each month at most, and to send the bank certificates of deposit to the Secretary of the Treasury. Whenever that certificate of deposit

fails to arrive at the proper time, the secretary knows that the officer thus failing is acting the knave; and, if he is himself disposed to do his duty, he has him immediately removed from office, and thereby cuts him off from the possibility of embezzling but little more than the receipts of a single month. But by the sub-treasury system the money is to lie month after month in the hands of individuals; larger amounts are to accumulate in the hands of the receivers-general and some others, by perhaps ten to one, than ever accumulated in the hands of individuals before; yet during all this time, in relation to this great stake, the Secretary of the Treasury can comparatively know nothing. Reports, to be sure, he will have; but reports are often false, and always false when made by a knave to cloak his knavery. Long experience has shown that nothing short of an actual demand of the money will expose an adroit peculator. Ask him for reports, and he will give them to your heart's content; send agents to examine and count the money in his hands, and he will borrow of a friend, merely to be counted and then returned, a sufficient sum to make the sum square. Try what you will, it will all fail till you demand the money; then, and not till then, the truth will come.

The sum of the whole matter I take to be this:



Under the bank system, while sums of money, by the law, were permitted to lie in the hands of individuals for very short periods only, many and very large defalcations occurred by those individuals. Under the subtreasury system much larger sums are to lie in the hands of individuals for much longer periods, thereby multiplying temptation in proportion as the sums are larger, and multiplying opportunity in proportion as the periods are longer to and for those individuals to embezzle and escape with the public treasure; and therefore, just in the proportion that the temptation and the opportunity are greater under the subtreasury than the bank system, will the peculations and defalcations be greater under the former than they have been under the latter. The truth of this, independent of actual experience, is but little less than self-evident. I therefore leave it.

But it is said, and truly too, that there is to be a penitentiary department to the subtreasury. This, the advocates of the system will have it, will be a "king cure-all." Before I go farther, may I not ask if the penitentiary department is not itself an admission that they expect the public money to be stolen? Why build the cage if they expect to catch no birds? But as to the question how effectual the penitentiary will be in preventing defalcations. How effectual have

penitentiaries heretofore been in preventing the crimes they were established to suppress? Has not confinement in them long been the legal penalty of larceny, forgery, robbery, and many other crimes, in almost all the States? And yet are not those crimes committed weekly, daily,—nay, and even hourly,—in every one of those States? Again, the gallows has long been the penalty of murder, and yet we scarcely open a newspaper that does not relate a new case of that crime. If, then, the penitentiary has ever heretofore failed to prevent larceny, forgery, and robbery, and the gallows and halter have likewise failed to prevent murder, by what process of reasoning, I ask, is it that we are to conclude the penitentiary will hereafter prevent the stealing of the public money? But our opponents seem to think they answer that charge that the money will be stolen fully if they can show that they will bring the offenders to punishment. Not so. Will the punishment of the thief bring back the stolen money? No more so than the hanging of a murderer restores his victim to life. What is the object desired? Certainly not the greatest number of thieves we can catch, but that the money may not be stolen. If, then, any plan can be devised for depositing the public treasure where it will never be stolen, never embezzled, is not that the plan to be adopted? Turn, then,



to a national bank, and you have that plan, fully and completely successful, as tested by the experience of forty years.

I have now done with the three propositions that the subtreasury would injuriously affect the currency, and would be more expensive and less secure as a depository of the public money than a national bank. How far I have succeeded in establishing their truth, is for others to judge. Omitting, for want of time, what I had intended to say as to the effect of the subtreasury to bring the public money under the more immediate control of the President than it has ever heretofore been, I now ask the audience, when Mr. Calhoun shall answer me, to hold him to the questions. Permit him not to escape them. Require him either to show that the subtreasury would not injuriously affect the currency, or that we should in some way receive an equivalent for that injurious effect. Require him either to show that the subtreasury would not be more expensive as a fiscal agent than a bank, or that we should in some way be compensated for that additional expense. And particularly require him to show that the public money would be as secure in the subtreasury as in a national bank, or that the additional insecurity would be overbalanced by some good result of the proposed change.

No one of them, in my humble judgment, will

he be able to do; and I venture the prediction, and ask that it may be especially noted, that he will not attempt to answer the proposition that the subtreasury would be more expensive than a national bank as a fiscal agent of the government.

As a sweeping objection to a national bank, and consequently an argument in favor of the subtreasury as a substitute for it, it often has been urged, and doubtless will be again, that such a bank is unconstitutional. We have often heretofore shown, and therefore need not in detail do so again, that a majority of the Revolutionary patriarchs, who ever acted officially upon the question, commencing with General Washington, and embracing General Jackson, the larger number of the signers of the Declaration, and of the framers of the Constitution, who were in the Congress of 1791, have decided upon their oaths that such a bank is constitutional. We have also shown that the votes of Congress have more often been in favor of than against its constitutionality. In addition to all this, we have shown that the Supreme Court—that tribunal which the Constitution has itself established to decide constitutional questions—has solemnly decided that such a bank is constitutional. Protesting that these authorities ought to settle the question,—ought to be conclusive,—I will not

urge them further now. I now propose to take a view of the question which I have not known to be taken by any one before. It is that whatever objection ever has or ever can be made to the constitutionality of a bank, will apply with equal force, in its whole length, breadth, and proportions, to the subtreasury. Our opponents say there is no express authority in the Constitution to establish a bank, and therefore, a bank is unconstitutional; but we with equal truth may say there is no express authority in the Constitution to establish a subtreasury, and therefore a subtreasury is unconstitutional. Who, then, has the advantage of this "express authority" argument? Does it not cut equally both ways? Does it not wound them as deeply and as deadly as it does us? Our position is that both are constitutional. The Constitution enumerates expressly several powers which Congress may exercise, superadded to which is a general authority "to make all laws necessary and proper" for carrying into effect all the powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States. One of the express powers given Congress is "to lay and collect taxes, duties, imports, and excises; to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States." Now, Congress is expressly authorized to make all laws necessary and proper

for carrying this power into execution. To carry it into execution, it is indispensably necessary to collect, safely keep, transfer, and disburse a revenue. To do this, a bank is "necessary and proper." But, say our opponents, to authorize the making of a bank, the necessity must be so great that the power just recited would be nugatory without it; and that that necessity is expressly negatived by the fact that they have got along ten whole years without such a bank. Immediately we turn on them, and say that that sort of necessity for a subtreasury does not exist, because we have got along forty whole years without one. And this time, it may be observed that we are not merely equal with them in the argument, but we beat them forty to ten, or, which is the same thing, four to one. On examination, it will be found that the absurd rule which prescribes that before we can constitutionally adopt a national bank as a fiscal agent, we must show an indispensable necessity for it, will exclude every sort of fiscal agent that the mind of man can conceive. A bank is not indispensable, because we can take the subtreasury; the subtreasury is not indispensable, because we can take the bank. The rule is too absurd to need further comment. Upon the phrase "necessary and proper" in the Constitution, it seems to me more reasonable to say that some fiscal agent is indispensably necessary;

but inasmuch as no particular sort of agent is thus indispensable, because some other sort might be adopted, we are left to choose that sort of agent which may be most "proper" on grounds of expediency. But it is said the Constitution gives no power to Congress to pass acts of incorporation. Indeed! What is the passing of an act of incorporation but the making of a law? Is any one wise enough to tell? The Constitution expressly gives Congress power "to pass all laws necessary and proper," etc. If, then, the passing of a bank charter be the "making a law necessary and proper," is it not clearly within the constitutional power of Congress to do so?

I now leave the bank and the subtreasury to try to answer, in a brief way, some of the arguments which on previous evenings here have been urged by Messrs. Lamborn and Douglas. Mr. Lamborn admits that "errors," as he charitably calls them, have occurred under the present and late administrations; but he insists that as great "errors" have occurred under all administrations. This we respectfully deny. We admit that errors may have occurred under all administrations; but we insist that there is no parallel between them and those of the two last. If they can show that their errors are no greater in number and magnitude than those of former

times, we call off the dogs. But they can do no such thing. To be brief, I will now attempt a contrast of the "errors" of the two latter with those of former administrations, in relation to the public expenditures only. What I am now about to say as to the expenditures will be, in all cases, exclusive of payments on the national debt. By an examination of authentic public documents, consisting of the regular series of annual reports made by all the secretaries of the treasury from the establishment of the government down to the close of the year 1838, the following contrasts will be presented:

(1) The last ten years under General Jackson and Mr. Van Buren cost more money than the first twenty-seven did (including the heavy expenses of the late British war) under Washington, Adams, Jefferson, and Madison.

(2) The last year of J. Q. Adams's administration cost, in round numbers, thirteen millions, being about one dollar to each soul in the nation; the last (1838) of Mr. Van Buren's cost forty millions, being about two dollars and fifty cents to each soul, and being larger than the expenditure of Mr. Adams in the proportion of five to two.

(3) The highest annual expenditure during the late British war—being in 1814, and while we had in actual service rising 188,000 militia,





*J. Q. Adams*





together with the whole regular army, swelling the number to greatly over 200,000, and they to be clad, fed, and transported from point to point, with great rapidity and corresponding expense, and to be furnished with arms and ammunition, and they to be transported in like manner, and at like expense—was no more in round numbers than thirty millions; whereas the annual expenditure of 1838, under Mr. Van Buren, and while we were at peace with every government in the world, was forty millions; being over the highest year of the late and very expensive war in the proportion of four to three.

(4) General Washington administered the government eight years for sixteen millions. Mr. Van Buren administered it one year (1838) for forty millions; so that Mr. Van Buren expended twice and a half as much in one year as General Washington did in eight, and being in the proportion of twenty to one; or in other words, had General Washington administered the government twenty years at the same average expense that he did for eight, he would have carried us through the whole twenty for no more money than Mr. Van Buren has expended in getting us through the single one of 1838. Other facts equally astounding might be presented from the same authentic document; but I deem the foregoing abundantly sufficient to establish

the proposition that there is no parallel between the "errors" of the present and late administrations and those of former times, and that Mr. Van Buren is wholly out of the line of all precedents.

But Mr. Douglas, seeing that the enormous expenditure of 1838 has no parallel in the olden times, comes in with a long list of excuses for it. This list of excuses I will rapidly examine, and show, as I think, that the few of them which are true prove nothing, and that the majority of them are wholly untrue in fact. He first says that the expenditures of that one year were made under the appropriations of Congress—one branch of which was a Whig body. It is true that those expenditures were made under the appropriations of Congress; but it is untrue that either branch of Congress was a Whig body. The Senate had fallen into the hands of the administration more than a year before, as proven by the passage of the Expunging Resolution; and at the time those appropriations were made there were too few Whigs in that body to make a respectable struggle, in point of numbers, upon any question. This is notorious to all. The House of Representatives that voted those appropriations was the same that first assembled at the called session of September, 1838. Although it refused to pass the Subtreasury Bill,

a majority of its members were elected as friends of the administration, and proved their adherence to it by the election of a Van Buren speaker, and two Van Buren clerks. It is clear, then, that both branches of the Congress that passed those appropriations were in the hands of Mr. Van Buren's friends, so that the Whigs had no power to arrest them, as Mr. Douglas would insist. And is not the charge of extravagant expenditures equally well sustained, if shown to have been made by a Van Buren Congress, as if shown to have been made in any other way? A Van Buren Congress passed the bills, and Mr. Van Buren himself approved them, and consequently the party are wholly responsible for them.

Mr. Douglas next says that a portion of the expenditures of that year was made for the purchase of public lands from the Indians. Now it happens that no such purchase was made during that year. It is true that some money was paid that year in pursuance of Indian treaties; but no more, or rather not as much as had been paid on the same account in each of several preceding years.

Next he says that the Florida war created many millions of this year's expenditure. This is true, and it is also true that during that and every other year that that war has existed, it has

cost three or four times as much as it would have done under an honest and judicious administration of the government. The large sums foolishly, not to say corruptly, thrown away in that war constitute one of the just causes of complaint against the administration. Take a single instance. The agents of the government in connection with that war needed a certain steamboat; the owner proposed to sell it for ten thousand dollars; the agents refused to give that sum, but hired the boat at one hundred dollars per day, and kept it at that hire till it amounted to ninety-two thousand dollars. This fact is not found in the public reports, but depends with me, on the verbal statement of an officer of the navy, who says he knows it to be true. That the administration ought to be credited for the reasonable expenses of the Florida war, we have never denied. Those reasonable charges, we say, could not exceed one or two millions a year. Deduct such a sum from the forty-million expenditure of 1838, and the remainder will still be without a parallel as an annual expenditure.

Again, Mr. Douglas says that the removal of the Indians to the country west of the Mississippi created much of the expenditure of 1838. I have examined the public documents in relation to this matter, and find that less was paid for the removal of Indians in that than in

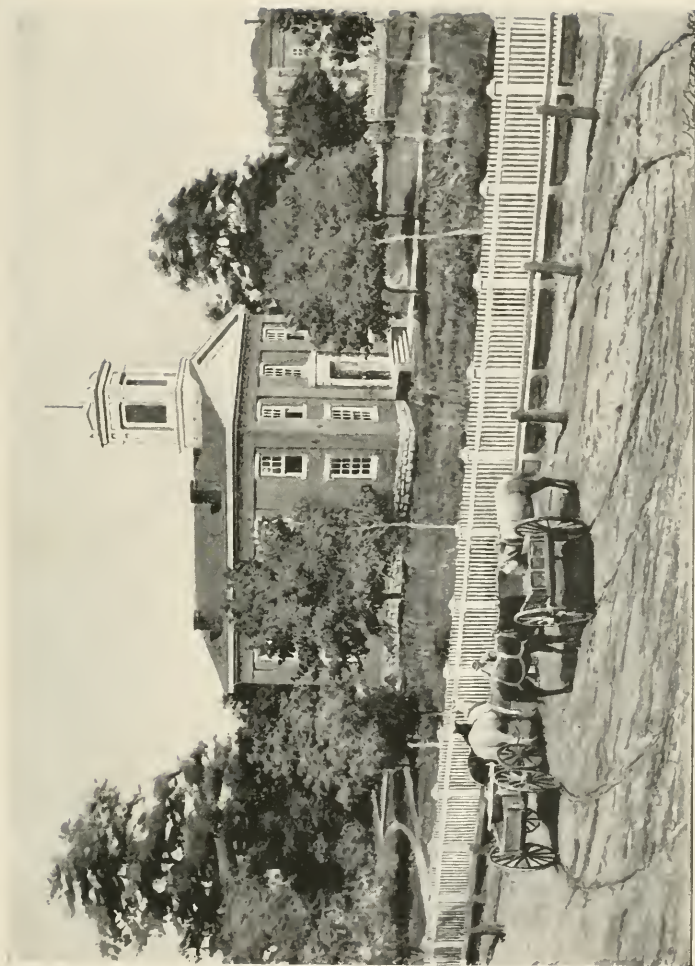
some former years. The whole sum expended on that account in that year did not much exceed one quarter of a million. For this small sum, although we do not think the administration entitled to credit, because large sums have been expended in the same way in former years, we consent it may take one and make the most of it.

Next, Mr. Douglas says that five millions of the expenditures of 1838 consisted of the payment of the French indemnity money to its individual claimants. I have carefully examined the public documents, and thereby find this statement to be wholly untrue. Of the forty millions of dollars expended in 1838, I am enabled to say positively that not one dollar consisted of payments on the French indemnities. So much for that excuse.

Next comes the Post-office. He says that five millions were expended during that year to sustain that department. By a like examination of public documents, I find this also wholly untrue. Of the so often mentioned forty millions, not one dollar went to the Post-office. I am glad, however, that the Post-office has been referred to, because it warrants me in digressing a little to inquire how it is that that department of the government has become a charge upon the treasury, whereas under Mr. Adams and the presidents before him it not only, to use a homely

phrase, cut its own fodder, but actually threw a surplus into the treasury. Although nothing of the forty millions was paid on that account in 1838, it is true that five millions are appropriated to be so expended in 1839; showing clearly that the department has become a charge upon the treasury. How has this happened? I account for it in this way. The chief expense of the Post-office Department consists of the payments of contractors for carrying the mail. Contracts for carrying the mails are by law let to the lowest bidders, after advertisement. This plan introduces competition, and insures the transportation of the mails at fair prices, so long as it is faithfully adhered to. It has ever been adhered to until Mr. Barry was made postmaster-general. When he came into office, he formed the purpose of throwing the mail contracts into the hands of his friends, to the exclusion of his opponents. To effect this, the plan of letting to the lowest bidder must be evaded, and it must be done in this way: the favorite bid less by perhaps three or four hundred per cent than the contract could be performed for, and consequently shutting out all honest competition, became the contractor. The Postmaster-General would immediately add some slight additional duty to the contract, and under the pretense of extra allowance for extra services





COURT-HOUSE AT PETERSBURG, MENARD COUNTY, WHERE LINCOLN WAS NOMINATED FOR CONGRESS.



run the contract to double, triple, and often quadruple what honest and fair bidders had proposed to take it at. In 1834 the finances of the department had become so deranged that total concealment was no longer possible, and consequently a committee of the Senate were directed to make a thorough investigation of its affairs. Their report is found in the Senate Documents of 1833-4, Vol. V, Doc. 422; which documents may be seen at the secretary's office, and I presume elsewhere in the State. The report shows numerous cases of similar import, of one of which I give the substance. The contract for carrying the mail upon a certain route had expired, and of course was to be let again. The old contractor offered to take it for \$300 a year, the mail to be transported thereon three times a week, or for \$600 transported daily. One James Reeside bid \$40 for three times a week, or \$99 daily, and of course received the contract. On the examination of the committee, it was discovered that Reeside had received for the service on this route, which he had contracted to render for less than \$100, the enormous sum of \$1,999! This is but a single case. Many similar ones, covering some ten or twenty pages of a large volume, are given in that report. The department was found to be insolvent to the amount of half a million, and to have been so grossly

mismanaged, or rather so corruptly managed, in almost every particular, that the best friends of the Postmaster-General made no defense of his administration of it. They admitted that he was wholly unqualified for that office; but still he was retained in it by the President until he resigned it voluntarily about a year afterward. And when he resigned it, what do you think became of him? Why, he sunk into obscurity and disgrace, to be sure, you will say. No such thing. Well, then, what did become of him? Why, the President immediately expressed his high disapprobation of his almost unequaled incapacity and corruption by appointing him to a foreign mission, with a salary and outfit of \$18,000 a year! The party now attempt to throw Barry off, and to avoid the responsibility of his sins. Did not the President indorse those sins when, on the very heel of their commission, he appointed their author to the very highest and most honorable office in his gift, and which is but a single step behind the very goal of American political ambition?

I return to another of Mr. Douglas's excuses for the expenditures of 1838, at the same time announcing the pleasing intelligence that this is the last one. He says that ten millions of that year's expenditure was a contingent appropriation, to prosecute an anticipated war with Great

Britain on the Maine boundary question. Few words will settle this. First, that the ten millions appropriated was not made till 1839, and consequently could not have been expended in 1838; second, although it was appropriated, it has never been expended at all. Those who heard Mr. Douglas recollect that he indulged himself in a contemptuous expression of pity for me. "Now he's got me," thought I. But when he went on to say that five millions of the expenditure of 1838 were payments of the French indemnities, which I knew to be untrue; that five millions had been for the Post-office, which I knew to be untrue; that ten millions had been for the Maine boundary war, which I not only knew to be untrue, but supremely ridiculous also; and when I saw that he was stupid enough to hope that I would permit such groundless and audacious assertions to go unexposed,—I readily consented that, on the score both of veracity and sagacity, the audience should judge whether he or I were the more deserving of the world's contempt.

Mr. Lamborn insists that the difference between the Van Buren party and the Whigs is that although the former sometimes err in practice, they are always correct in principle, whereas the latter are wrong in principle; and, better to impress this proposition, he uses a fig-

urative expression in these words: "The Democrats are vulnerable in the heel, but they are sound in the head and the heart." The first branch of the figure—that is, that the Democrats are vulnerable in the heel—I admit is not merely figuratively, but literally true. Who that looks but for a moment at their Swartwouts, their Prices, their Harringtons, and their hundreds of others, scampering away with the public money to Texas, to Europe, and to every spot of the earth where a villain may hope to find refuge from justice, can at all doubt that they are most distressingly affected in their heels with a species of "running itch." It seems that this malady of their heels operates on these sound-headed and honest-hearted creatures very much like the cork leg in the comic song did on its owner: which, when he had once got started on it, the more he tried to stop it, the more it would run away. At the hazard of wearing this point threadbare, I will relate an anecdote which seems too strikingly in point to be omitted. A witty Irish soldier, who was always boasting of his bravery when no danger was near, but who invariably retreated without orders at the first charge of an engagement, being asked by his captain why he did so, replied: "Captain, I have as brave a heart as Julius Cæsar ever had; but, somehow or other, whenever danger approaches, my cow-

ardly legs will run away with it." So with Mr. Lamborn's party. They take the public money into their hand for the most laudable purpose that wise heads and honest hearts can dictate; but before they can possibly get it out again, their rascally "vulnerable heels" will run away with them.

Seriously, this proposition of Mr. Lamborn is nothing more or less than a request that his party may be tried by their professions instead of their practices. Perhaps no position that the party assumes is more liable to or more deserving of exposure than this very modest request; and nothing but the unwarrantable length to which I have already extended these remarks forbids me now attempting to expose it. For the reason given, I pass it by.

I shall advert to but one more point. Mr. Lamborn refers to the late elections in the States, and from their results confidently predicts that every State in the Union will vote for Mr. Van Buren at the next presidential election. Address that argument to cowards and to knaves; with the free and the brave it will effect nothing. It may be true; if it must, let it. Many free countries have lost their liberty, and ours may lose hers; but if she shall, be it my proudest plume, not that I was the last to desert, but that I never deserted her. I know that the great vol-



cano at Washington, aroused and directed by the evil spirit that reigns there, is belching forth the lava of political corruption in a current broad and deep, which is sweeping with frightful velocity over the whole length and breadth of the land, bidding fair to leave unscathed no green spot or living thing; while on its bosom are riding, like demons on the waves of hell, the imps of that evil spirit, and fiendishly taunting all those who dare resist its destroying course with the hopelessness of their effort; and, knowing this, I cannot deny that all may be swept away. Broken by it I, too, may be; bow to it I never will. The probability that we may fall in the struggle ought not to deter us from the support of a cause we believe to be just; it shall not deter me. If ever I feel the soul within me elevate and expand to those dimensions not wholly unworthy of its almighty Architect, it is when I contemplate the cause of my country, deserted by all the world beside, and I standing up boldly and alone, and hurling defiance at her victorious oppressors. Here, without contemplating consequences, before high heaven and in the face of the world, I swear eternal fidelity to the just cause, as I deem it, of the land of my life, my liberty, and my love. And who that thinks with me will not fearlessly adopt the oath that I take? Let none falter who thinks he is

right, and we may succeed. But if, after all, we shall fail, be it so. We still shall have the proud consolation of saying to our consciences, and to the departed shade of our country's freedom, that the cause approved of our judgment, and adored of our hearts, in disaster, in chains, in torture, in death, we never faltered in defending.

### LETTER TO JOHN T. STUART

SPRINGFIELD, December 23, 1839.

*Dear Stuart:* Dr. Henry will write you all the political news. I write this about some little matters of business. You recollect you told me you had drawn the Chicago Masack money, and sent it to the claimants. A—— hawk-billed Yankee is here besetting me at every turn I take, saying that Robert Kinzie never received the eighty dollars to which he was entitled. Can you tell anything about the matter? Again, old Mr. Wright, who lives up South Fork somewhere, is teasing me continually about some deeds which he says he left with you, but which I can find nothing of. Can you tell where they are? The legislature is in session, and has suffered the bank to forfeit its charter without benefit of clergy. There seems to be little disposition to resuscitate it.

Whenever a letter comes from you to Mrs. ——, I carry it to her, and then I see Betty; she

is a tolerable nice "fellow" now. Maybe I will write again when I get more time.

Your friend, as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

P. S. The Democratic giant is here, but he is not now worth talking about. A. L.

### LETTER TO JOHN T. STUART

SPRINGFIELD, January 1, 1840.

*Dear Stuart:* There is considerable disposition, on the part of both parties in the legislature, to reinstate the law bringing on the congressional elections next summer. What motive for this the Locos have, I cannot tell. The Whigs say that the canal and other public works will stop, and consequently we shall then be clear of the foreign votes, whereas by another year they may be brought in again. The Whigs of our district say that everything is in favor of holding the election next summer, except the fact of your absence, and several of them have requested me to ask your opinion on the matter. Write me immediately what you think of it.

On the other side of this sheet I send you a copy of my Land Resolutions, which passed both branches of our legislature last winter. Will you show them to Mr. Calhoun, informing him of the fact of their passage through our legislature? Mr. Calhoun suggested a similar

proposition last winter; and perhaps if he finds himself backed by one of the States, he may be induced to take it up again. You will see by the resolutions that you and the others of our delegation in Congress are instructed to go for them.

[Without signature.]

CIRCULAR FROM WHIG COMMITTEE, January  
[1?], 1840<sup>1</sup>

*Confidential.*

TO MESSRS. —.

**G**ENTLEMEN: In obedience to a resolution of the Whig State Convention, we have appointed you the Central Whig Committee of your county. The trust confided to you will be one of watchfulness and labor; but we hope the glory of having contributed to the overthrow of the corrupt powers that now control our beloved country will be a sufficient reward for the time and labor you will devote to it. Our Whig brethren throughout the Union have met in convention, and after due deliberation and mutual concessions have elected candidates for the presidency and vice-presidency not only worthy of our cause, but worthy of the support of every true patriot who would have our country redeemed, and her institutions honestly and faithfully

<sup>1</sup> Lincoln threw himself heart and soul into the campaign of 1840. Among the remarkable examples of his pen during this time is the above circular sent out by the Whig committee. It provided for a complete organization of the State.

administered. To overthrow the trained bands that are opposed to us, whose salaried officers are ever on the watch, and whose misguided followers are ever ready to obey their smallest commands, every Whig must not only know his duty, but must firmly resolve, whatever of time and labor it may cost, boldly and faithfully to do it. Our intention is to organize the whole State, so that every Whig can be brought to the polls in the coming presidential contest. We cannot do this, however, without your co-operation; and as we do our duty, so we shall expect you to do yours. After due deliberation, the following is the plan of organization, and the duties required of each county committee:

(1) To divide their county into small districts, and to appoint in each a subcommittee, whose duty it shall be to make a perfect list of all the voters in their respective districts, and to ascertain with certainty for whom they will vote. If they meet with men who are doubtful as to the man they will support, such voters should be designated in separate lines, with the name of the man they will probably support.

(2) It will be the duty of said subcommittee to keep a constant watch on the doubtful voters, and from time to time have them talked to by those in whom they have the most confidence,

and also to place in their hands such documents as will enlighten and influence them.

(3) It will also be their duty to report to you, at least once a month, the progress they are making, and on election days see that every Whig is brought to the polls.

(4) The subcommittees should be appointed immediately; and by the last of April, at least, they should make their first report.

(5) On the first of each month hereafter we shall expect to hear from you. After the first report of your subcommittees, unless there should be found a great many doubtful voters, you can tell pretty accurately the manner in which your county will vote. In each of your letters to us, you will state the number of certain votes both for and against us, as well as the number of doubtful votes, with your opinion of the manner in which they will be cast.

(6) When we have heard from all the counties, we shall be able to tell with similar accuracy the political complexion of the State. This information will be forwarded to you as soon as received.

(7) Inclosed is a prospectus for a newspaper to be continued until after the presidential election. It will be superintended by ourselves, and every Whig in the State must take it. It will be published so low that every one can afford



it. You must raise a fund and forward us for extra copies,—every county ought to send fifty or one hundred dollars,—and the copies will be forwarded to you for distribution among our political opponents. The paper will be devoted exclusively to the great cause in which we are engaged. Procure subscriptions, and forward them to us immediately.

(8) Immediately after any election in your county, you must inform us of its results; and as early as possible after any general election we will give you the like information.

(9) A senator in Congress is to be elected by our next legislature. Let no local interests divide you; but select candidates that can succeed.

(10) Our plan of operations will of course be concealed from every one except our good friends who of right ought to know them.

Trusting much in our good cause, the strength of our candidates, and the determination of the Whigs everywhere to do their duty, we go to the work of organization in this State confident of success. We have the numbers, and if properly organized and exerted, with the gallant Harrison at our head, we shall meet our foes and conquer them in all parts of the Union.

Address your letters to Dr. A. G. Henry, R. F. Barrett, A. Lincoln, E. D. Baker, J. F. Speed.

LETTER TO JOHN T. STUART<sup>1</sup>

SPRINGFIELD, January 20, 1840.

*Dear Stuart:* Yours of the 5th instant is received. It is the first from you for a great while. You wish the news from here. The legislature is in session yet, but has done nothing of importance. The following is my guess as to what will be done. The internal improvement system will be put down in a lump without benefit of clergy. The bank will be resuscitated with some trifling modifications. Whether the canal will go ahead or stop is very doubtful. Whether the State House will go ahead depends upon the laws already in force. A proposition made in the House to-day, to throw off to the Territory of Wisconsin about fourteen of our northern counties, decided: ayes, eleven; noes, seventy. Be sure to send me as many copies of the "Life of Harrison" as you can spare from other uses. Be very sure to procure and send me the "Senate Journal" of New York of September, 1814. I have a newspaper article which says that that document proves that Van Buren

<sup>1</sup> John T. Stuart was the man that advised Lincoln to study law, lent him the necessary books and finally made him his law partner. Both men ran for the legislature in 1834, and fought together in the Black Hawk War. Their friendship lasted through life.



W. H. Harrison



voted against raising troops in the last war. And, in general, send me everything you think will be a good "war-club."

The nomination of Harrison takes first-rate. You know I am never sanguine; but I believe we will carry the State. The chance for doing so appears to me twenty-five per cent better than it did for you to beat Douglas. A great many of the grocery sort of Van Buren men, as formerly, are out for Harrison. Our Irish blacksmith, Gregory, is for Harrison. I believe I may say that all our friends think the chance of carrying the State very good. You have heard that the Whigs and Locos had a political discussion shortly after the meeting of the legislature. Well, I made a big speech which is in progress of printing in pamphlet form. To enlighten you and the rest of the world, I shall send you a copy when it is finished. I can't think of anything else now. Your friend, as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

#### LETTER TO JOHN T. STUART

SPRINGFIELD, January 21, 1840.

*Dear Stuart:* A bill bringing on the congressional elections in this State next summer has passed the House of Representatives this minute. As I think it will also pass the Senate, I take the earliest moment to advise you of it.



I do not think any one of our political friends wishes to push you off the track. Anticipating the introduction of this bill, I wrote you for your feelings on the subject several weeks since, but have received no answer. It may be that my letter miscarried; if so, will you, on the receipt of this, write me what you think and feel about the matter? Nothing new except I believe I have got our Truett debt secured. I have Truett's note at twelve months, with his brother Myers as security. Your friend, as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

#### LETTER TO JOHN T. STUART

SPRINGFIELD, March 1, 1840.

*Dear Stuart:* I have never seen the prospects of our party so bright in these parts as they are now. We shall carry this county by a larger majority than we did in 1836, when you ran against May. I do not think my prospects individually are very flattering, for I think it probable I shall not be permitted to be a candidate; but the party ticket will succeed triumphantly. Subscriptions to the "Old Soldier" pour in without abatement. This morning I took from the post-office a letter from Dubois inclosing the names of sixty subscribers; and on carrying it to Francis, I found he had received one hundred and forty more from other quarters

by the same day's mail. That is but an average specimen of every day's receipts. Yesterday Douglas, having chosen to consider himself insulted by something in the "Journal," undertook to cane Francis in the street. Francis caught him by the hair and jammed him back against a market-cart, where the matter ended by Francis being pulled away from him. The whole affair was so ludicrous that Francis and everybody else (Douglas excepted) have been laughing about it ever since.

I send you the names of some of the Van Buren men who have come out for Harrison about town, and suggest that you send them some documents: Moses Coffman (he let us appoint him a delegate yesterday), Aaron Coffman, George Gregory, H. M. Briggs, — Johnson (at Birchall's book-store), Michael Glynn, — Armstrong (not Hosea, nor Hugh, but a carpenter), Thomas Hunter, Moses Pilcher (he was always a Whig, and deserves attention), Matthew Crowder, Jr., Greenberry Smith, John Fagan, George Fagan, William Fagan (these three fell out with us about Early, and are doubtful now), John Cartmel, Noah Rickard, John Rickard, Walter Marsh (the foregoing should be addressed at Springfield). Also send some to Solomon Miller and John Auth at Saulsbury; also to Charles Harper, Samuel Harper, and B.



C. Harper; and T. J. Scroggins, John Scroggins, at Pulaski, Logan County.

Speed says he wrote you what Jo. Smith said about you as he passed here. We will procure the names of some of his people here and send them to you before long. Speed also says you must not fail to send us the New York journal he wrote for some time since. Evan Bütler is jealous that you never send your compliments to him. You must not neglect him next time.

Your friend, as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

#### LETTER TO JOHN T. STUART

SPRINGFIELD, March 26, 1840.

*Dear Stuart:* In relation to the Kinzie matter, I can say no more than this, that the check was taken from the bank by you, and on the same day you made a note in our memorandum-book stating you had sent it by mail to Kinzie; but there is no memorandum concerning it at Irwin's. Kinzie has ceased writing about it, and consequently I have some hope that he has received it.

We have had a convention for nominating candidates in this county. Baker was put on the track for the Senate, and Bradford, Brown of the Island Grove, Josiah Francis, Darneille, and I for the House. Ninian was very much hurt

at not being nominated, but he has become tolerably well reconciled. I was much, very much, wounded myself at his being left out. The fact is, the county delegates made the nominations as they pleased; and they pleased to make them all from the country, except Baker and me, whom they supposed necessary to make stump speeches. Old Colonel Elkin is nominated for sheriff. That's right.

The Locos have no candidates on the track yet except Dick Taylor for the Senate. Last Saturday he made a speech, and May answered him. The way May let the wind out of him was a perfect wonder. The court-room was very full, and neither you nor I ever saw a crowd in this county so near all on one side, and all feeling so good, before. You will see a short account of it in the "Journal."

LINCOLN.

Japh Bell has come out for Harrison. Ain't that a caution?

## LETTER TO W. G. ANDERSON<sup>1</sup>

LAURENCEVILLE, October 31, 1840.

W. G. ANDERSON.

*Dear Sir:* Your note of yesterday is received. In the difficulty between us of which you speak,

<sup>1</sup> The letter to W. G. Anderson exemplifies the spirit of Lincoln in dealing with quarrelsome individuals. It recalls his

you say you think I was the aggressor. I do not think I was. You say my "words imported insult." I meant them as a fair set-off to your own statements, and not otherwise; and in that light alone I now wish you to understand them. You ask for my present "feelings on the subject." I entertain no unkind feelings to you, and none of any sort upon the subject, except a sincere regret that I permitted myself to get into such an altercation. Yours, etc.,

A. LINCOLN.

RESOLUTION IN THE ILLINOIS LEGISLATURE,  
November 28, 1840

In the Illinois House of Representatives, November 28, 1840, Mr. Lincoln offered the following:

*Resolved*, That so much of the governor's message as relates to fraudulent voting, and other fraudulent practices at elections, be referred to the Committee on Elections, with instructions to said

advice given many years afterward to a young officer condemned to be court-martialed for quarreling: "No man resolved to make most of himself can spare time for personal contentions. Still less can he afford to take all the consequences, including the vitiating of his temper and the loss of self-control. Yield larger things to which you can show no more than equal right and yield lesser though clearly your own. Better give your path to a dog than be bitten by him in contesting for the right. Even killing the dog would not cure the bite."

committee to prepare and report to the House a bill for such an act as may in their judgment afford the greatest possible protection of the elective franchise against all frauds of all sorts whatever.

REMARKS IN THE ILLINOIS LEGISLATURE,  
December 4, 1840

In the House of Representatives, Illinois, December 4, 1840, on presentation of a report respecting petition of H. N. Purple, claiming the seat of Mr. Phelps from Peoria, Mr. Lincoln moved that the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole on the question, and take it up immediately. Mr. Lincoln considered the question of the highest importance, whether an individual had a right to sit in this House or not. The course he should propose would be to take up the evidence and decide upon the facts *seriatim*.

Mr. Drummond wanted time; they could not decide in the heat of debate, etc.

Mr. Lincoln thought the question had better be gone into now. In courts of law jurors were required to decide on evidence, without previous study or examination. They were required to know nothing of the subject until the evidence was laid before them for their immediate decision. He thought that the heat of party would be augmented by delay.

The Speaker called Mr. Lincoln to order as being irrelevant; no mention had been made of party heat.

Mr. Drummond said he had only spoken of debate.

Mr. Lincoln asked what caused the heat, if it was not party? Mr. Lincoln concluded by urging that the question would be decided now better than hereafter, and he thought with less heat and excitement.

(Further debate. in which Lincoln participated.)

REMARKS IN THE ILLINOIS LEGISLATURE,  
December 4, 1840

In the Illinois House of Representatives, December 4, 1840—House in Committee of the Whole on the bill providing for payment of interest on the State debt—Mr. Lincoln moved to strike out the body and amendments of the bill, and insert in lieu thereof an amendment which in substance was that the governor be authorized to issue bonds for the payment of the interest; that these be called “interest bonds”; that the taxes accruing on Congress lands as they become taxable be irrevocably set aside and devoted as a fund to the payment of the interest bonds. Mr. Lincoln went into the reasons which appeared to him to render this plan preferable to

that of hypothecating the State bonds. By this course we could get along till the next meeting of the legislature, which was of great importance. To the objection which might be urged that these interest bonds could not be cashed, he replied that if our other bonds could, much more could these, which offered a perfect security, a fund being irrevocably set aside to provide for their redemption. To another objection that we should be paying compound interest, he would reply that the rapid growth and increase of our resources was in so great a ratio as to outstrip the difficulty; that his object was to do the best that could be done in the present emergency. All agreed that the faith of the State must be preserved; this plan appeared to him preferable to a hypothecation of bonds, which would have to be redeemed and the interest paid. How this was to be done, he could not see; therefore he had, after turning the matter over in every way, devised this measure, which would carry us on till the next legislature.

(Mr. Lincoln spoke at some length, advocating his measure.)

Lincoln advocated his measure, December 11, 1840.

December 12, 1840, he had thought some permanent provision ought to be made for the bonds to be hypothecated, but was satisfied taxa-

tion and revenue could not be connected with it now.

### LETTER TO JOHN T. STUART

SPRINGFIELD, December 17, 1840.

*Dear Stuart:* McRoberts was elected senator yesterday. The vote stood: McRoberts, seventy-seven; Cyrus Edwards, fifty; E. D. Baker, one; absent, three. This affair of appointment to office is very annoying—more so to you than to me, doubtless. I am, as you know, opposed to removals to make places for our friends. Bearing this in mind, I express my preference in a few cases, as follows: For marshal, first, John Dawson; second, Dr. B. F. Edwards. For postmaster here, Dr. Henry; Carlinville, Joseph C. Howell. There is no question of the propriety of removing the postmaster at Carlinville. I have been told by so many different persons as to preclude all doubt of its truth, that he boldly refused to deliver from his office during the canvass all documents franked by Whig members of Congress.

Yours, LINCOLN.

### REMARKS IN THE ILLINOIS LEGISLATURE, January 23, 1841

In the Illinois House of Representatives, January 23, 1841, while discussing the continuation





BOWLING GREEN'S HOUSE.

Bowling Green's log cabin, half a mile north of New Salem, just under the bluff, still stands, but long since ceased to be a dwelling-house, and is now a tumble-down old stable. Here Lincoln was a frequent boarder, especially during the period of his closest application to the study of the law. Stretched out on the cellar door of his cabin, reading a book, he met for the first time "Dick" Yates, then a college student at Jacksonville, and destined to become the great "War Governor" of the State. Yates had come home with William G. Greene to spend his vacation, and Greene took him around to Bowling Green's house to introduce him to "his friend Abe Lincoln." Unhappily there is nowhere in existence a picture of the original occupant of this humble cabin. Bowling Green was one of the leading citizens of the county. He was County Commissioner from 1826 to 1828; he was for many years a justice of the peace; he was a prominent member of the Masonic fraternity, and a very active and uncompromising Whig. The friendship between him and Lincoln, beginning at a very early day, continued until his death in 1842.

*J. McCan Davis.*



of the Illinois and Michigan Canal, Mr. Moore was afraid the holders of the "scrip" would lose.

Mr. Napier thought there was no danger of that; and

Mr. Lincoln said he had not examined to see what amount of scrip would probably be needed. The principal point in his mind was this, that nobody was obliged to take these certificates. It is altogether voluntary on their part, and if they apprehend it will fall on their hands, they will not take it. Further, the loss, if any there be, will fall on the citizens of that section of the country. This scrip is not going to circulate over an extensive range of country, but will be confined chiefly to the vicinity of the canal. Now, we find the representatives of that section of the country are all in favor of the bill. When we propose to protect their interests, they say to us: Leave us to take care of ourselves; we are willing to run the risk. And this is reasonable; we must suppose they are competent to protect their own interests, and it is only fair to let them do it.

#### LETTER TO JOHN T. STUART<sup>1</sup>

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, January 23, 1841.

*Dear Stuart:* Yours of the 3d instant is received, and I proceed to answer it as well as I

<sup>1</sup> Such profound depression as expressed in this letter to Stuart was not at all uncommon in Lincoln's life. His melancholy

can, though from the deplorable state of my mind at this time, I fear I shall give you but little satisfaction. About the matter of the congressional election, I can only tell you that there is a bill now before the Senate adopting the general ticket system; but whether the party have fully determined on its adoption is yet uncertain. There is no sign of opposition to you among our friends, and none that I can learn among our enemies; though of course there will be if the general ticket be adopted. The "Chicago American," "Peoria Register," and "Sangamon Journal" have already hoisted our flag upon their own responsibility, and the other Whig papers of the district are expected to follow immediately. On last evening there was a meeting of our friends at Butler's, and I submitted the question to them, and found them unanimously in favor of having you announced as a candidate. A few of us this morning, however, concluded that as you were already being announced in the papers, we would delay announcing you, as by your own authority, for a week or two. We thought that to appear too keen about it might spur our opponents on about

in 1841 took rise from the breaking of his engagement with Miss Mary Todd, whom he was to have married January first of that year. Lincoln himself put off the wedding, fearing the crucial step. Almost two years later Miss Todd and Lincoln were eventually married.

their general ticket project. Upon the whole, I think I may say with certainty that your reelection is sure, if it be in the power of the Whigs to make it so.

For not giving you a general summary of news, you must pardon me; it is not in my power to do so. I am now the most miserable man living. If what I feel were equally distributed to the whole human family, there would not be one cheerful face on the earth. Whether I shall ever be better, I cannot tell; I awfully forbode I shall not. To remain as I am is impossible; I must die or be better, it appears to me. The matter you speak of on my account you may attend to as you say, unless you shall hear of my condition forbidding it. I say this because I fear I shall be unable to attend to any business here, and a change of scene might help me. If I could be myself, I would rather remain at home with Judge Logan. I can write no more. Your friend, as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

CIRCULAR FROM WHIG COMMITTEE, February  
[8?], 1841

*Appeal to the People of the State of Illinois.*

FELLOW-CITIZENS: When the General Assembly, now about adjourning, assembled in November last, from the bankrupt state of the public treasury, the pecuniary embarrassments prevailing in every department of society, the dilapidated state of the public works, and the impending danger of the degradation of the State, you had a right to expect that your representatives would lose no time in devising and adopting measures to avert threatened calamities, alleviate the distresses of the people, and allay the fearful apprehensions in regard to the future prosperity of the State. It was not expected by you that the spirit of party would take the lead in the councils of the State, and make every interest bend to its demands. Nor was it expected that any party would assume to itself the entire control of legislation, and convert the means and offices of the State, and the substance of the people, into alimment for party subsistence. Neither could it

have been expected by you that party spirit, however strong its desires and unreasonable its demands, would have passed the sanctuary of the Constitution, and entered with its unhallowed and hideous form into the formation of the judiciary system.

At the early period of the session, measures were adopted by the dominant party to take possession of the State, to fill all public offices with party men, and make every measure affecting the interests of the people and the credit of the State operate in furtherance of their party views. The merits of men and measures therefore became the subject of discussion in caucus, instead of the halls of legislation, and decisions there made by a minority of the legislature have been executed and carried into effect by the force of party discipline, without any regard whatever to the rights of the people or the interests of the State. The Supreme Court of the State was organized, and judges appointed, according to the provisions of the Constitution, in 1824. The people have never complained of the organization of that court; no attempt has ever before been made to change that department. Respect for public opinion, and regard for the rights and liberties of the people, have hitherto restrained the spirit of party from attacks upon the independence and integrity of the judiciary. The



same judges have continued in office since 1824; their decisions have not been the subject of complaint among the people; the integrity and honesty of the court have not been questioned, and it has never been supposed that the court has ever permitted party prejudice or party considerations to operate upon their decisions. The court was made to consist of four judges, and by the Constitution two form a quorum for the transaction of business. With this tribunal, thus constituted, the people have been satisfied for near sixteen years. The same law which organized the Supreme Court in 1824 also established and organized circuit courts to be held in each county in the State, and five circuit judges were appointed to hold those courts. In 1826 the legislature abolished these circuit courts, repealed the judges out of office, and required the judges of the Supreme Court to hold the circuit courts. The reasons assigned for this change were, first, that the business of the country could be better attended to by the four judges of the Supreme Court than by the two sets of judges; and, second, the state of the public treasury forbade the employment of unnecessary officers. In 1828 a circuit was established north of the Illinois River, in order to meet the wants of the people, and a circuit judge was appointed to hold the courts in that circuit.



"MR. LINCOLN TOOK THE PAPERS FROM THE HANDS OF THE CRIPPLED SOLDIER, AND SAT DOWN WITH HIM AT THE FOOT OF A CONVENIENT TREE"



In 1834 the circuit-court system was again established throughout the State, circuit judges appointed to hold the courts, and the judges of the Supreme Court were relieved from the performance of circuit court duties. The change was recommended by the then acting governor of the State, General W. L. D. Ewing, in the following terms:

The augmented population of the State, the multiplied number of organized counties, as well as the increase of business in all, has long since convinced every one conversant with this department of our government of the indispensable necessity of an alteration in our judiciary system, and the subject is therefore recommended to the earnest patriotic consideration of the legislature. The present system has never been exempt from serious and weighty objections. The idea of appealing from the circuit court to the same judges in the Supreme Court is recommended by little hopes of redress to the injured party below. The duties of the circuit, too, it may be added, consume one half of the year, leaving a small and inadequate portion of time (when that required for domestic purposes is deducted) to erect, in the decisions of the Supreme Court, a judicial monument of legal learning and research, which the talent and ability of the court might otherwise be entirely competent to.

With this organization of circuit courts the

people have never complained. The only complaints which we have heard have come from circuits which were so large that the judges could not dispose of the business, and the circuits in which Judges Pearson and Ralston lately presided.

Whilst the honor and credit of the State demanded legislation upon the subject of the public debt, the canal, the unfinished public works, and the embarrassments of the people, the judiciary stood upon a basis which required no change—no legislative action. Yet the party in power, neglecting every interest requiring legislative action, and wholly disregarding the rights, wishes, and interests of the people, has, for the unholy purpose of providing places for its partizans and supplying them with large salaries, disorganized that department of the government. Provision is made for the election of five party judges of the Supreme Court, the proscription of four circuit judges, and the appointment of party clerks in more than half the counties of the State. Men professing respect for public opinion, and acknowledged to be leaders of the party, have avowed in the halls of legislation that the change in the judiciary was intended to produce political results favorable to their party and party friends. The immutable principles of justice are to make way

for party interests, and the bonds of social order are to be rent in twain, in order that a desperate faction may be sustained at the expense of the people. The change proposed in the judiciary was supported upon grounds so destructive to the institutions of the country, and so entirely at war with the rights and liberties of the people, that the party could not secure entire unanimity in its support,—three Democrats of the Senate and five of the House voting against the measure. They were unwilling to see the temples of justice and the seats of independent judges occupied by the tools of faction. The declarations of the party leaders, the selection of party men for judges, and the total disregard for the public will in the adoption of the measure, prove conclusively that the object has been not reform, but destruction; not the advancement of the highest interests of the State, but the predominance of party.

We cannot in this manner undertake to point out all the objections to this party measure; we present you with those stated by the Council of Revision upon returning the bill, and we ask for them a candid consideration.

Believing that the independence of the judiciary has been destroyed, that hereafter our courts will be independent of the people, and entirely dependent upon the legislature; that our



rights of property and liberty of conscience can no longer be regarded as safe from the encroachments of unconstitutional legislation; and knowing of no other remedy which can be adopted consistently with the peace and good order of society, we call upon you to avail yourselves of the opportunity afforded, and, at the next general election, vote for a convention of the people.

S. H. LITTLE,

E. D. BAKER,

J. J. HARDIN,

E. B. WEBB,

A. LINCOLN,

J. GILLESPIE,

*Committee on behalf of the Whig members of  
the Legislature.*

EXTRACT FROM A PROTEST IN THE ILLINOIS LEG-  
ISLATURE AGAINST THE REORGANIZATION  
OF THE JUDICIARY, February 26, 1841

For the reason thus presented, and for others no less apparent, the undersigned cannot assent to the passage of the bill, or permit it to become a law, without this evidence of their disapprobation; and they now protest against the reorganization of the judiciary, because—(1) It violates the great principles of free government by subjecting the judiciary to the legislature. (2) It is a fatal blow at the independence of the



judges and the constitutional term of their office. (3) It is a measure not asked for, or wished for, by the people. (4) It will greatly increase the expense of our courts, or else greatly diminish their utility. (5) It will give our courts a political and partizan character, thereby impairing public confidence in their decisions. (6) It will impair our standing with other States and the world. (7) It is a party measure for party purposes, from which no practical good to the people can possibly arise, but which may be the source of immeasurable evils.

The undersigned are well aware that this protest will be altogether unavailing with the majority of this body. The blow has already fallen, and we are compelled to stand by, the mournful spectators of the ruin it will cause.

Signed by 35 members, among whom was Abraham Lincoln.

## LETTER TO JOSHUA F. SPEED

SPRINGFIELD, June 19, 1841.

**D**EAR SPEED: We have had the highest state of excitement here for a week past that our community has ever witnessed; and although the public feeling is somewhat allayed, the curious affair which aroused it is very far from being even yet cleared of mystery. It would take a quire of paper to give you anything like a full account of it, and I therefore only propose a brief outline. The chief personages in the drama are Archibald Fisher, supposed to be murdered, and Archibald Traylor, Henry Traylor, and William Traylor, supposed to have murdered him. The three Trailors are brothers; the first, Arch., as you know, lives in town; the second, Henry, in Clary's Grove; and the third, William, in Warren County; and Fisher, the supposed murdered, being without a family, had made his home with William. On Saturday evening, being the 29th of May, Fisher and William came to Henry's in a one-horse dearborn, and there stayed over Sunday; and on Monday all three came to Springfield (Henry on

horseback), and joined Archibald at Myers's, the Dutch carpenter. That evening at supper Fisher was missing, and so next morning some ineffectual search was made for him; and on Tuesday, at one o'clock P. M. William and Henry started home without him. In a day or two Henry and one or two of his Clary Grove neighbors came back for him again, and advertised his disappearance in the papers. The knowledge of the matter thus far had not been general, and here it dropped entirely, till about the 10th instant, when Keys received a letter from the postmaster in Warren County, that William had arrived at home, and was telling a very mysterious and improbable story about the disappearance of Fisher, which induced the community there to suppose he had been disposed of unfairly. Keys made this letter public, which immediately set the whole town and adjoining county agog. And so it has continued until yesterday. The mass of the people commenced a systematic search for the dead body, while Wickersham was despatched to arrest Henry Traylor at the Grove, and Jim Maxcy to Warren to arrest William. On Monday last, Henry was brought in, and showed an evident inclination to insinuate that he knew Fisher to be dead, and that Arch. and William had killed him. He said he guessed the body could be

found in Spring Creek, between the Beards-town road and Hickox's mill. Away the people swept like a herd of buffalo, and cut down Hickox's mill-dam *nolens volens*, to draw the water out of the pond, and then went up and down and down and up the creek, fishing and raking, and raking and ducking, and diving for two days, and, after all, no dead body found.

In the mean time a sort of scuffling-ground had been found in the brush in the angle, or point, where the road leading into the woods past the brewery and the one leading in past the brick-yard meet. From the scuffle-ground was the sign of something about the size of a man having been dragged to the edge of the thicket, where it joined the track of some small-wheeled carriage drawn by one horse, as shown by the road-tracks. The carriage-track led off toward Spring Creek. Near this drag-trail Dr. Mer-ryman found two hairs, which, after a long scientific examination, he pronounced to be triangular human hair, which term, he says, includes within it the whiskers, the hair growing under the arms and on other parts of the body; and he judged that these two were of the whiskers, because the ends were cut, showing that they had flourished in the neighborhood of the razor's operations. On Thursday last Jim Maxcy brought in William Traylor from War-

ren. On the same day Arch. was arrested and put in jail. Yesterday (Friday) William was put upon his examining trial before May and Lovely. Archibald and Henry were both present. Lamborn prosecuted, and Logan, Baker, and your humble servant defended. A great many witnesses were introduced and examined, but I shall only mention those whose testimony seemed most important. The first of these was Captain Ransdell. He swore that when William and Henry left Springfield for home on Tuesday before mentioned, they did not take the direct route,—which, you know, leads by the butcher shop,—but that they followed the street north until they got opposite, or nearly opposite, May's new house, after which he could not see them from where he stood; and it was afterward proved that in about an hour after they started, they came into the street by the butcher shop from toward the brick-yard. Dr. Merryman and others swore to what is stated about the scuffle-ground, drag-trail, whiskers, and carriage-tracks. Henry was then introduced by the prosecution. He swore that when they started for home, they went out north, as Ransdell stated, and turned down west by the brick-yard into the woods, and there met Archibald; that they proceeded a small distance farther, when he was placed as a sentinel to

watch for and announce the approach of any one that might happen that way; that William and Arch. took the dearborn out of the road a small distance to the edge of the thicket, where they stopped, and he saw them lift the body of a man into it; that they then moved off with the carriage in the direction of Hickox's mill, and he loitered about for something like an hour, when William returned with the carriage, but without Arch., and said they had put him in a safe place; that they went somehow—he did not know exactly how—into the road close to the brewery, and proceeded on to Clary's Grove. He also stated that some time during the day William told him that he and Arch. had killed Fisher the evening before; that the way they did it was by him (William) knocking him down with a club, and Arch. then choking him to death.

An old man from Warren, called Dr. Gilmore, was then introduced on the part of the defense. He swore that he had known Fisher for several years; that Fisher had resided at his house a long time at each of two different spells—once while he built a barn for him, and once while he was doctored for some chronic disease; that two or three years ago Fisher had a serious hurt in his head by the bursting of a gun, since which he had been subject to continued bad





W. H. Bartlett

R. Sands





health and occasional aberration of mind. He also stated that on last Tuesday, being the same day that Maxcy arrested William Trailor, he (the doctor) was from home in the early part of the day, and on his return, about eleven o'clock, found Fisher at his house in bed, and apparently very unwell; that he asked him how he came from Springfield; that Fisher said he had come by Peoria, and also told of several other places he had been at more in the direction of Peoria, which showed that he at the time of speaking did not know where he had been wandering about in a state of derangement. He further stated that in about two hours he received a note from one of Trailor's friends, advising him of his arrest, and requesting him to go on to Springfield as a witness, to testify as to the state of Fisher's health in former times; that he immediately set off, calling up two of his neighbors as company, and, riding all evening and all night, overtook Maxcy and William at Lewiston in Fulton County; that Maxcy refusing to discharge Trailor upon his statement, his two neighbors returned and he came on to Springfield. Some question being made as to whether the doctor's story was not a fabrication, several acquaintances of his (among whom was the same postmaster who wrote Keys, as before mentioned) were introduced as sort of compur-

gators, who swore that they knew the doctor to be of good character for truth and veracity, and generally of good character in every way. Here the testimony ended, and the Trailors were discharged, Arch. and William expressing both in word and manner their entire confidence that Fisher would be found alive at the doctor's by Galloway, Mallory, and Myers, who a day before had been despatched for that purpose; while Henry still protested that no power on earth could ever show Fisher alive. Thus stands this curious affair. When the doctor's story was first made public, it was amusing to scan and contemplate the countenances and hear the remarks of those who had been actively in search for the dead body: some looked quizzical, some melancholy, and some furiously angry. Porter, who had been very active, swore he always knew the man was not dead, and that he had not stirred an inch to hunt for him; Langford, who had taken the lead in cutting down Hickox's mill-dam, and wanted to hang Hickox for objecting, looked most awfully woebegone: he seemed the "victim of unrequited affection," as represented in the comic almanacs we used to laugh over; and Hart, the little drayman that hauled Molly home once, said it was too *damned* bad to have so much trouble, and no hanging after all.

I commenced this letter on yesterday, since

which I received yours of the 13th. I stick to my promise to come to Louisville. Nothing new here except what I have written. I have not seen —— since my last trip, and I am going out there as soon as I mail this letter.

Yours forever, LINCOLN.

STATEMENT ABOUT HARRY WILTON, June 25,  
1841

It having been charged in some of the public prints that Harry Wilton, late United States marshal for the district of Illinois, had used his office for political effect, in the appointment of deputies for the taking of the census for the year 1840, we, the undersigned, were called upon by Mr. Wilton to examine the papers in his possession relative to these appointments, and to ascertain therefrom the correctness or incorrectness of such charge.

We accompanied Mr. Wilton to a room, and examined the matter as fully as we could with the means afforded us. The only sources of information bearing on the subject which were submitted to us, were the letters, etc., recommending and opposing the various appointments made, and Mr. Wilton's verbal statements concerning the same. From these letters, etc., it appears that in some instances appointments were made in accordance with the recommenda-

tions of leading Whigs, and in opposition to those of leading Democrats; among which instances the appointments at Scott, Wayne, Madison and Lawrence are the strongest. According to Mr. Wilton's statement, of the seventy-six appointments we examined, fifty-four were of Democrats, eleven of Whigs, and eleven of unknown politics.

The chief ground of complaint against Mr. Wilton, as we had understood it, was because of his appointment of so many Democratic candidates for the legislature, thus giving them a decided advantage over their Whig opponents; and consequently our attention was directed rather particularly to that point. We found that there were many such appointments, among which were these in Tazewell, McLean, Iroquois, Coles, Menard, Wayne, Washington, Fayette, etc.; and we did not learn that there was one instance in which a Whig candidate for the legislature had been appointed. There was no written evidence before us showing us at what time those appointments were made; but Mr. Wilton stated that they all, with one exception, were made before those appointed became candidates for the legislature, and the letters, etc., recommending them all bear date before, and most of them long before, those appointed were publicly announced candidates.

We give the foregoing naked facts, and draw no conclusions from them.

BENJ. S. EDWARDS,  
A. LINCOLN.

### LETTER TO MISS MARY SPEED<sup>1</sup>

BLOOMINGTON, ILL., September 27, 1841.

MISS MARY SPEED, Louisville, Ky.

*My Friend:* Having resolved to write to some of your mother's family, and not having the express permission of any one of them to do so, I have had some little difficulty in determining on which to inflict the task of reading what I now feel must be a most dull and silly letter; but when I remembered that you and I were something of cronies while I was at Farmington, and that while there I was under the necessity of shutting you up in a room to prevent your committing an assault and battery upon me, I instantly decided that you should be the devoted one. I assume that you have not heard from Joshua and myself since we left, because I think it doubtful whether he has written. You re-

<sup>1</sup> Lincoln was returning from a visit to the home of the Speeds in Kentucky when he penned the picture of cheerful slaves. But Lincoln had seen the darker side of the picture years before while visiting New Orleans. John Hanks, his cousin, said it was then and there that he conceived an undying horror of the slave system.

member there was some uneasiness about Joshua's health when we left. That little indisposition of his turned out to be nothing serious, and it was pretty nearly forgotten when we reached Springfield. We got on board the steamboat *Lebanon* in the locks of the canal, about twelve o'clock M. of the day we left, and reached St. Louis the next Monday at 8 P. M. Nothing of interest happened during the passage, except the vexatious delays occasioned by the sand-bars be thought interesting. By the way, a fine example was presented on board the boat for contemplating the effect of condition upon human happiness. A gentleman had purchased twelve negroes in different parts of Kentucky, and was taking them to a farm in the South. They were chained six and six together. A small iron clevis was around the left wrist of each, and this was fastened to the main chain by a shorter one, at a convenient distance from the others, so that the negroes were strung together precisely like so many fish upon a trot-line. In this condition they were being separated forever from the scenes of their childhood, their friends, their fathers and mothers, and brothers and sisters, and many of them from their wives and children, and going into perpetual slavery, where the lash of the master is proverbially more ruthless and unrelenting than



any other where; and yet amid all these distressing circumstances, as we would think them, they were the most cheerful and apparently happy creatures on board. One whose offense for which he had been sold was an over-fondness for his wife, played the fiddle almost continually, and the others danced, sang, cracked jokes, and played various games with cards from day to day. How true it is that "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," or in other words, that he renders the worst of human conditions tolerable, while he permits the best to be nothing better than tolerable. To return to the narrative. When we reached Springfield, I stayed but one day, when I started on this tedious circuit where I now am. Do you remember my going to the city, while I was in Kentucky, to have a tooth extracted, and making a failure of it? Well, that same old tooth got to paining me so much that about a week since I had it torn out, bringing with it a bit of the jaw-bone, the consequence of which is that my mouth is now so sore that I can neither talk nor eat.

I am literally "subsisting on savory remembrances"—that is, being unable to eat, I am living upon the remembrance of the delicious dishes of peaches and cream we used to have at your house. When we left, Miss Fanny Henning was owing you a visit, as I understood.

Has she paid it yet? If she has, are you not convinced that she is one of the sweetest girls in the world? There is but one thing about her, so far as I could perceive, that I would have otherwise than as it is—that is, something of a tendency to melancholy. This, let it be observed, is a misfortune, not a fault.

Give her an assurance of my very highest regard when you see her. Is little Siss Eliza Davis at your house yet? If she is, kiss her “o’er and o’er again” for me.

Tell your mother that I have not got her “present” [an “Oxford” Bible] with me, but I intend to read it regularly when I return home. I doubt not that it is really, as she says, the best cure for the blues, could one but take it according to the truth. Give my respects to all your sisters (including Aunt Emma) and brothers. Tell Mrs. Peay, of whose happy face I shall long retain a pleasant remembrance, that I have been trying to think of a name for her homestead, but as yet cannot satisfy myself with one. I shall be very happy to receive a line from you soon after you receive this, and in case you choose to favor me with one, address it to Charleston, Coles County, Ill., as I shall be there about the time to receive it. Your sincere friend,

A. LINCOLN.

















